THE
NEW YORK LEDGER
DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XIII. R. BONNER, {EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR, NO. 44 ANN-STREET. NEW YORK, OCTOBER 3 1857. TERMS, {$2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 30.

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LADY CLAUDINE;

OR,

THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE.

A DRAMATIC TALE.

BY DR. HORATIO W. NELSON.

CHAPTER IV.

The deep repose of night, which cast its mantle of silence and of mystery over the mansion of Brinsley Oakes, over the innocence and over the guilt therein enclosed, was suddenly broken, an hour after the close of our last chapter, by the startling tones of the tocsin sounding the alarm of fire! Loud and sonorously, its awful toll awaked the thousands of sleepers in the city of Bath, and the quick, sharp cry of "Fire, Fire!" aroused those heavier citizens whose duller ears were insensible to the wild knell of the rattling bells from tower and steeple. Brinsley Oakes was dreaming upon his couch of guilt and sleepless anxiety, and the sounds of the alarm mingled with his dream.

He thought he was in an ancient hall of the homes of his ancestors, which was lined with portraits of his forefathers, ranged in rows along the tapestried walls. He thought he was pacing up and down this venerable gallery of effigies, planning how he should effectually avert all suspicion from him as the author of the highway robbery of the evening before, when one of the portraits, that of his father, in the uniform of a general, seemed to fasten his eyes upon him fixedly, and arrested the gaze of his own. He stopped and regarded it more closely, and became assured that the eyes were regarding him with a fixed and stern, though mingled with a pitiful, expression. He tried to believe it was imagination; but the naturalness of the eyes, and the certainty that they moved and gleamed, convinced him that the appearance was supernatural.

He tried to turn his gaze away, but in vain. His vision seemed fascinated and fastened, as by a spell, upon the eyes of the picture of his father. To his horror he now saw the lips move,and from the flexible and living mouth came forth these words:

"Son, was it to see thee what thou art, this hour, I lavished upon thy boyhood and youth wealth, affection, and placed thee in the army, trusting to see thee one day add fresh glories to thy ancestral name?"

The gamester bowed his head in shame and confusion; but the next moment, from another portrait, that of his grandfather, attired as an admiral, came a voice of reproof.

"Son, when, in many battles, I periled my life, that I might transmit to my son, and my son's son, a great name, rather would I have poured out upon the field my heart's blood, than have my fame and honor made infamous in the third descent from my loins."

Scarcely had he spoken than a mitred bishop, in full length robes, spoke and said,—

"Son, when I left my name to your grandsire, it was unstained, as it was handed down to me by my noble and virtuous father. In you the pure stream is tainted, and upon your head and upon your soul lies the weight of the curses of a long line of pious and honorable sires!"

"Son!" spoke the grim portrait of a mailed knight, "was it to transmit my blood to you, reckless and dishonored soldier, that I won knighthood and glory, and emblazoned upon my shield deeds of arms?"

"Son," continued another noble personage in a robe of ermine, "has my name, as a just judge and a friend of truth, at last been dishonored by thee, in whom all thy ancestors, with horror, see the end of their long line of glory and merit?"

And so, for twelve generations before him, the ancestor belonging to each opened his lips and uttered his solemn reproof; among them nobles, warriors, and princes of the Norman blood.

The soul of Brinsley Oakes thrilled with horror. He felt that his forefathers had risen from their graves in judgment against him. He knew not how to reply. His tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, and cold drops of sweat stood upon his brows. While he stood, with trembling knees, before these indignant ancestors, he thought he heard the solemn tolling of a distant bell, like the measured stroke of a funeral procession. It grew louder and clearer, and he soon saw the tall gothic doors of the gallery flung wide open, and beheld enter a long line of mourning women. He could see the venerable faces of the foremost, but they were all strange to him; yet, as they passed the spot where he stood transfixed with awe, they bended their eyes upon him with looks of sorrowful recognition, each one naming his name, with "Alas, how art thou fallen!" In the last of the women he recognized the features of his dead mother. She paused before him, and raised her clasped hands in anguish, while tears coursed down her pale cheeks. But she spoke no word, and passed on in silence.

Next came an empty bier, borne by four masked figures, and they set it down before him, and without a word surrounded him, while the deep bell tolled and tolled on.

"What means all this?" he demanded, with horror.

"This is thy burial! Thine hour is come! We are sent for thy body!"

"For thy body!" answered the first portrait from his frame, in a solemn voice; and the deep bell tolled louder.

"For thy body!" answered the second portrait, and the third, and so, one after another, each took up the dread refrain.

LADY CLAUDINE'S MYSTERIOUS VISITOR.

"For thy body!" chaunted the long procession of women; and louder, and heavier, and more dreadfully tolled the death-knell.

The four men seized him and laid him upon the bier, and in their hands he felt he had no power to resist.

Then came a louder peal of the bell, and, two and two, came a procession of fiends, each bearing a torch, and as they entered the gallery, they danced about him as he lay upon the bier, and their leader said,—

"For thy soul!"

"For thy soul!" said a second, in unearthly tones.

"For thy soul—thy soul—thy soul!" said they all, till the vast gallery rung with the horrible words. Yet, amid all, he had no power to move. He seemed spell-bound and made passive by a force irresistible, as if an icy cold hand was clasped over his heart, and chilled the fountain of his life. Then he thought the demons, one and all, cried,

"Let us pile the fire! Let us pile the fire! Let us kindle the everlasting fire!"

"Fire!" said the leader, casting his torch beneath the bier. And loudly the bell tolled, as if in the air above him.

"Fire!" said a second, and flung his torch also underneath; and more solemnly swung the death-knell.

"Fire! Fire! Fire!" sung the whole party of demons, each tossing his torch upon the pile beneath his bier, while the flames curled up about him. Feeling that he was about to perish upon a funeral pyre, his danger and the horror of the scene gave him supernatural strength, and breaking away, with a fearful cry, from his captors, he leaped from the bier to the floor!

He was in his own room, standing by the bed, out of which he had sprung to escape, in his horrible dream. Cries of "fire, fire" still rung in his ears, and the deep tolling of the bell for a few moments made him doubt if he were not still under the influence of the horrible night-mare which the retributive Angel of Dreams, out of conscience and self-accusation, had created in his sleep.

He stood trembling by his couch, like a shaking poplar-tree; and could not, for some time, realize that the sounds he now heard came from hoarse and deep voices of excited men in the street, and that the fire-bells, which still were booming out their alarm upon the midnight sky, were not the funeral notes he had heard in his sleep.

"I have been taken to the very gates of hell!" he groaned, in a tone of mingled horror and desperation. "If dreams so affright, and fill the soul so with dread, what must it be hereafter, where hell is one eternal night-mare of the damned soul? It was only a dream, the Fates be thanked! But how like the reality! And should my dishonored ancestors address me from their portrait frames, would it not be in tones such as I heard—tones of sorrow and anger? And my mother! her face of pity, and love, and woe, I shall never forget, though it was seen but in a dream! And those fiends! Horror! Ho, sirrah! slave—Ethiop! Up. I need company! I must hear the voice of a living man—though but of a negro! I am afraid—I am afraid to be alone," he added, in a husky whisper.

The slave leaped to his feet, and stood before him, only to start back with affright. The lights had not been extinguished at all, and revealed to him the face of his master changed, as if a score of years had been lived by him in the one short hour of sleep. His hair, so black the day before, was bleached white as snow, and his hollow cheeks, and sunken starry eyes, and looks of helpless fear, were in keeping with this change so wonderful, which horror had wrought upon him.

"Bress de Lor an' gospel! Is dat yourself, Massa?" was all the words which the slave could articulate, as he stared upon him with his hands upraised, palms outward.

"What is it, fool? What do you start at, as if you had seen Satan himself, as I have?"

"Bress de Lor'! Massa, you been scare to def, sartain! Look in the mirrorum! You hair white as chalk!"

Captain Oakes, who was a handsome man, and vain of his person, sprang to the mirror, gave a single glance, and then sprang back with an oath too dreadful and impious to be written with ink and pen. A second look he had the courage to take, as if to verify the fact that he had in one night become gray, and then shrieking out "God's curse," in thrilling tones of anguish, fiercely dashed his clenched hand into the magnificent, full-length pier glass, which confirmed this truth, and fell insensible from rage and grief upon the carpet.

The same startling bell-peal and cries of fire-alarm which had so singularly given origin, and scenery, and incidents to this guilty man's dream, fell also upon the ears of Lady Claudine. But they did not find her asleep, nor alone in her boudoir.

There was present with her, midnight as it was, a woman wrapped in a threadbare, gray cloak, with a hood of the same cloth hanging back from her head, leaving it and the face exposed. She was about five or six and thirty years of age, with a head finely shaped and superbly poised upon her neck, while the outlines of her form, so far as could be discerned through the folds of her apparel, were singularly symmetrical. Her features were as faultless as a Grecian chisel, enmarbling Diana, could have shaped, and not even the passionate and reckless air of her flushed face could wholly destroy the delicacy of their outline. The woman was the still beautiful wreck of one of a high-bred race; and her proudly-curved lip, her flashing eyes, and the haughty arch of her brow, showed that ungoverned feeling, or, more properly, an uncontrolled spirit, had led to her present dissipated and defiant air.

Lady Claudine, sleepless after her base husband's menacing departure in the early evening, had sought solace from her troubled thoughts in a book. Yet, unable wholly to make it absorb her attention, she would sometimes lay it down upon her lap, with her finger still between the leaves, and sigh heavily. The career of her once loving husband not only broke her heart, (for women's hearts *do* break when they are trod upon), but filled her with dread of some dreadful issue too horrible to imagine. She knew that he was a criminal, and that he had become so intoxicated, nay, insane with play, that he would not hesitate to resort to any steps to which his needs might drive him! But the idea that he should ever so forget himself as to make use of the highwayman's pistol, as well as the forger's pen, did not even enter her thoughts. With all his guilt, she did believe that he had yet left some of the elements of a gentleman and a man of honor.

"How will he obtain this eight thousand pounds? I know his temper so well that he will obtain it before to-morrow! Pray Heaven he do no more forgeries! Oh, that I could replace this money; for if my brother discovers the crime he will have no mercy; for I know his opinion of him! But these thoughts do no good! I am helpless. I must look to the only aid in my sorrow and perplexity. God, oh, God! give me wisdom, strength and guidance,—for before me all is darkness and trouble!"

She had dropped her book upon the floor, and fallen before her chair upon her knees; and was kneeling in silent supplication with her hands clasped upon her tumultuously heaving bosom, when a figure crossed before her window, between the casement and the moonlight, and stood gazing in upon the Madonna-like statue of the praying Claudine. After a few moments the figure opened one side of the venetian blinds and noislessly entered. The eyes of Claudine were closed; but, though she heard no footfall, she suddenly felt that mysterious sense of not being alone, which the unseen and unknown presence of another never fails to produce upon a highly organized nature.

She started from her position of prayer, and rising to her feet, looked around and beheld a stranger standing before her;—the female already described.

"Who and what are you?" she demanded, startled and affrighted at the sudden entrance and strange appearance of this secret midnight visitor.

"Praying?" she said, with a glance of scorn; "I once could kneel and pray! But I oftener curse than pray! I came not to see *thee!* I looked for another!" answered the woman, addressing her with looks of admiration and cusiosity. "Art thou Claudine Heathcoate?"

Claudine had now recovered her self-possession, and in her turn regarded the splendid wreck of feminine beauty before her with wonder. She did not reply to this interrogation, not knowing hardly how to answer the bold question.

"Yet I need not ask. Thy peerless beauty betrays thee! I have never seen thee before, lady! But rumor has not lied about thee? Thy person would tempt kings to take off their crowns and place them on thy regal brows! Much more—— But, I half forgive him since mine eyes behold thee! Wert thou less magnificent in thy womanly glory I would hate thee! Half the wrong is atoned for since such an Eve offered him the apple of Paradise!"

"Woman—beautiful and wretched in aspect—who art thou? and what mean these mysterious words?"

"I could laugh, fair Claudine, that thou knowest not, nor suspectest who I am. *He* has kept the secret. And so will I, at least, I will not tell it now. I will keep it as a sword in the sheath—harmless until drawn and thrust into the heart of a foe. Do not shrink back into doubt and fear. I will not harm thee! Thou art too beautiful and good (the poor say thou art *good*, and these never lie) for me to hate thee! I see, too, that thou art sad! So am I! I see thou hast been weeping. So have I. I used to weep days at the time! but my eyes are dried up! I weep no longer! When I ought to weep I laugh; and when I should shed tears I utter execrations! I did not think sorrow would find its way into this marble palace, or even peep in at the plate windows, much more familiarly tread the gorgeous carpets of its golden-paneled halls."

"You are unhappy, I know! Your words and looks show a heart crushed, and a soul dark, and a spirit broken!" said Claudine, in a kind and sympathizing tone of voice, still wondering who the wild and handsome gypsy-looking woman could be. She knew that she was a lady, or rather had once been one, by her language and bearing; but she felt that some great evil had impaired the steadiness of her reason, and that she was now in a greater or less degree a lunatic. Her singular costume of gray cloth and hood, her long black hair hanging half dishevelled adown the sides of her face, the wild splendor of her large eyes, and the desperate energy expressed by her curved, thin-lipped mouth, even had she remained silent, were eloquent manifestations of a disordered and shattered intellect. Therefore, with sympathy and pity, Claudine spoke to her. The tone of kindness seemed to make an impression upon the stranger. She advanced a step, and with a softer look said:—

"Sister, for are we not both sad? and sorrow and sadness are sisters! I would not tell thee for all the love that is in Heaven what has crushed my heart, and made dark my soul, and broken my spirit? Once—but not now—once I would have told thee with a dagger at thy white bosom and the cry of vengeance in your delicate ear! Nay—fly not back? I will not harm thee now! I see it all! You could not know what you did! and he—had he not some excuse, with thy wondrous beauty, to make him captive? No—you are innocent, Claudine Heathcoate; but once I swore on the altar of the very sanctuary whereat you plighted your vows to—to—accursed be the name! On that altar of God I swore, that before that altar, ere a year should pass, your slain body should lay wrapped in a winding-sheet, where it had been draped in a bridal-robe!"

"Woman, I fear you! Go!"

"Fear me? I fear myself! I wonder not that you fear me! But I will not hurt a hair of thy head, Claudine Heathcoate! I can forgive *thee*—for thou knewest not that such a being as I lived on earth!"

"How have I wronged thee, then? What is it that led thee to swear that terrible oath?" demanded Claudine, with all the firmness that she could command; for she began to guess at some fearful truth hidden beneath all this incoherency and vehemence of language.

Ere the woman could reply, if any answer she intended to give, the alarm bell, which had reached the ears of Brinsley Oakes in his sleep and created his dream of horrors, pealed out loudly and sonorously; while the watchmen of the night, responding with their deep voices with shouts of "fire," rotated their sharp rattles, and all at once converting the stillness of night into the uproar and confusion of chaos, while on the horizon, above the tall roofs of the "Crescent," a red glare arose columnor-like far into the heavens.

"Fire! fire!" shrieked the woman, with a loud laugh. "Oh, this is a grand sight! I love to see destruction, and hear noise and confusion, and witness ruin, and desolation and death. Wont it be a day, Claudine Heathcoate, when the world ends? When the heavens will be on fire, the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the stars shall fall, and the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall be turned into blood, and lightnings, and thunderings and voices shall all mingle together, and the earth blaze like a furnace, till all that is therein shall be burned up! What a time it will be! What a grand spectacle to enjoy! Fire! fire! Hear them shout fire as if they were all mad with joy!" Here she suddenly changed her whole manner to one subdued and touching; and, with an expression of ineffable sadness which seemed to bring back much of the softness of former beauty, she said, plaintively, laying her hand on Claudine's arm, who did not shrink from the touch:—

"They say I am mad! *He* said so! He ought to know—don't you think he ought to know? because, lady, if I am mad *he* ought to know! Who could know so well as he? Don't you whisper even to the moon I said so! for there is a wicked spirit in the moon that would tell him, and then he would send me back again!"

"Poor lady!"

"Yes—I am poor, and sad, and a pitiful creature! If I am mad he knows it! I suppose I ought to be mad! It is right I should be mad, isn't it? Don't you think I deserved to be mad? But if I am, he knows it, and ought to know it, for I was not mad till—till he said I was mad! and he ought to know it, if I am!"

"What fearful thing is this? Speak out and tell me what you seem to wish to reveal, and yet fear to trust fully to words! I pity you! I see you have been wronged! Perhaps you have been guilty;—but surely are you not now punished for all your sins?"

"Sins?" and the strange, beautiful wreck of what evidently was once a proud and glorious creature—but now bereft of reason—opened her eyes wide and fastened them, with a bewildered look, upon Claudine's face. "Sins? Yes. But once I was innocent and pure! I have nothing to tell," she suddenly cried, in a rapid and alarmed voice; "said I that I had? I've told nothing! I swore to him if he would not kill my child, but only let it live, I would never tell! I did not tell! I did not! Oh, if I have, and he hears it, he will kill my child! Fire! fire! hear the bells, and rattles, and screams, and uproar! I must be there among it! If I stay here you will make me tell, and then he will kill my child! But if I don't say anything he lets it live, though I never see it! but he tells me every year it lives! But —— Look! how the bright flames fork and shoot up, and the flakes go down the wind all a-blazing; and what a noise the engines make with the thunder of the captain's and the shouting. I never miss a fire, and must go there, too—but first I must see *him*—for the fire will burn and burn till I come!"

"Woman, stay! You have filled my soul with suspicions and dreadful conjectures! Stay—I am thy true friend, whosoever thou——"

But the woman had already disappeared through the window as she came, and fled along the balcony or piazza that extended in front of the range of windows on that wing of the mansion.

"It is strange," said Claudine; "has this visit been real, or do I dream? Yet I am awake. What a wonderful being! and how fearful her wild beauty and pitiful the varied phrases of her madness! Some great wickedness hath destroyed her! What am I to make of her harangue? Is it possible that Brinsley Oakes has still a crime to answer for by the side of which his forgeries are harmless pastimes! Yet how, otherwise, can I interpret her words! Yet, perhaps, it may be only part of her madness, and that to any other woman she would talk in the same wild and mystic manner! I fear to take the suspicion into my thoughts, that presses upon me! Oh! wretched woman that I am! Have I given my heart and hand to a monster? To one who has deceived me in all that a woman and a wife cherishes as her peculiar honor and glory—in the singleness and exclusiveness of his love! A child! Away thoughts! Let shame and pride forbid me to harbor for a moment the temptation to believe what I fear is too true! If it be true—if he have deceived my love—if I find I have been mocked and dishonored, I will cast myself at once upon the protection of my noble brothers; for indignation, grief, shame, wounded self-respect, ten thousand emotions will combine to force the very recollection of him from my heart; but the heart will first be broken! Alas, how little do wealth and splendor, and beauty and rank, and the gratification of every desire of the eye, contribute to happiness. Without question I am at this moment the most wretched woman on earth!"

"Except *me*, my lady! except me!"

Claudine looked round at the voice with a start of surprise and Mary Mayflower rushed into the boudoir by the door and cast herself at her feet in tears.

"What is the matter, child? What new horror?"

"They have carried Thomas off to prison!"

"Thomas? For what?"

"For the robbery, my lady," sobbed Mary; "the officers just came in as the fire broke out and took him off. He only had time to send me word just three minutes ago; oh, my lady, and I didn't know what to do but to come to tell you! Oh! it will kill me! poor, dear Thomas! and we to be married! and he to sleep in a cold stone jail; and chained down to bolts! Oh, my poor heart! Save him, mistress! He is innocent!"

"What robbery?"

"A gentleman was robbed in the lane, the night; and he says he saw Thomas close by, and he sent and had him just taken; when it wasn't Thomas at all! I know who did it, as I stood by the gate in the lane with Thomas, and saw the robbery."

"Do not distress yourself, child! If he is innocent, as I have no doubt he is, if you say so, he will be released in a few hours. I will do all I can for him and you, and will go to the prison and also see the justice! But if he is released it will be because you tell who did it! Upon your giving the name of the robber they will let Stephenson go free! Who was he? It was a bold deed so near us!"

Instead of replying, the poor girl, seeing the dilemma in which she was placed if she revealed the truth, burst into fresh tears, and rocked herself to and fro in a paroxysm of indescribable anguish.

CHAPTER V.

The full moon shone broadly and brilliantly upon the piazza of the princely mansion of Brinsley Oakes, as that beautiful wreck of woman, the stranger who had entered through the window the apartment of Lady Claudine, glided noiselessly along, after leaving the boudoir. The softness of her step which gave back no audible sound was explained by the betrayal of her small naked feet which gleamed like shells of pearl in the moonbeams as they glanced in and out beneath her gray robes.

"I ought not to have made such a mistake—I ought not to have gone into the window opening into her boudoir," she murmured to herself, as she hurried along the gallery. "I have left sorrow there, and another heart weary like my heart? My poor tongue said too much! But how can my crazed head keep in what it should not let out! How lovely and glorious is her beauty! not a leaf of it has begun to wither; while mine is in the sear frosts of autumn, ere my years have tolled the half of my summer time! Ah, the moon! Bright and sweet goddess of my love and worship! How thy smile fills my soul with strange, wild joy! To thee I can tell all my secrets! thou wilt listen ever, and never weep nor reprove nor scold. Mother of the mad and miserable! Sister of the sad and sorrowful! Soother of the solitary! Light of the lonely! I live and move and breathe only in thy light and glory! Madonna of the maniac, be my guide and pray for me to Him who made thee! Ah, if *he* should hear me, he would say I was mad! for people say the mad love the moon! I will keep quiet and not let my madness out; for he must be near! This is the window that opened into his library, the seventh from the centre of the gallery to the right. I took the left, and the seventh window in that direction brought me to Claudine Heathcoate's chamber! I fear I've told her what I ought not—what I swore not to breathe if *he* would spare my child's life! I don't know what I told her—but his name, I am sure I did not speak it—for I never speak it—it sets my tongue on fire! But I will know if my child lives! I will know where he is! This is the seventh window from the centre stairway! The stupid serving man at the gate, looking at the fire, I trust told me truly when I asked him which was his master's room! for through the blinds I see the book-cases of his library. Now will I know where my child is—and then I will go away and trouble him no more! See, how bravely the fire burns! How grandly it climbs and winds like a red anaconda up that tall steeple! I love to see churches burn! It was in a church he proved false to me!"

At this moment, the African opening the window, which had leaves like folding-doors, stepped out upon the piazza to watch the conflagration, which about a quarter of a mile off was consuming a church which had just ignited. The mysterious woman shrunk back from observation in the deep shadow of a thick clematis which overgrew for the length of many yards the front of the piazza. Pompey, in order to get a better view of the fire, walked along to the extremity of the gallery, the red glare of the fiery gleam reflecting from the low clouds, upon his ebony visage, with a strange, wild light. The woman seemed evidently to recognize him and to fear him.

After he passed on some distance she softly stepped forward and looked in at the casement. It was all light within; for Brinsley Oakes never remained a moment in the dark, and never *alone*, even by day, if it were in his power to be in the presence of any one; and even the society of his groom was a relief to the loneliness which otherwise he could not endure.

She stole softly and noiselessly to the window, which the slave (for such he was still, in fact, to his master, though on British soil) had left open. She looked in and beheld lying on the floor the prostrate and seemingly insensible form of Brinsley Oakes, his hair as white as snow! She sprang forward into the room to verify the suspicion that it was his corpse, and a nearer view showed her that he was breathing heavily, and laboring as if in a fit. She stooped and raised his gray head which was bent under his left arm, as he had fallen some half an hour before. He now breathed easier, but still seemed wholly insensible.

"He is not dead! Hath God stricken him that he is white headed! This is strange! Has his slave beheld this and left him to die?" she said, as she tried by rubbing his temples to revive him. Here is wine! I will pour it into his mouth. He revives! Though he curse me when he shall speak again, I shall not let him die. I have once loved him—I love him still—though he has made my poor brain mad by his neglect of me for another, and his tyranny over me! I love him and would kiss his feet if he could love me again! Brinsley! Ho! Brinsley Oakes! Arouse thee from death! It is Kate that calls, that is near you, that loves you! What hath happened to thee?"

The guilty man opened his eyes and stared vacantly about him. He half rose to his elbow and fixed his gaze upon the wild, earnest, beautiful yet haggard face that was bending over him, its expressive and sad compound of love and lunacy.

"What!" he cried, as he seemed to recognize her; "art thou come to torment me before my time? Where am I that I see thee? Is this the world of eternal woe, and art thou also sent thither? No—no! This is is no place for thee! Thou should'st be forgiven and in Heaven! I alone should atone for thee and me!"

"Brinsley! Look about you! This is your own room!" she said, sadly.

"I see! I have been dreaming again! Would to God I could keep awake ever! Sleep is horror! How camest thou here? What doest thou in my house, woman?" he demanded, now fully restored to consciousness, and leaping to his feet. "Begone! Thou hast risked thy life, and what is more to thee, thy child's?" he cried, fiercely placing his hand upon her shoulder, and leading her towards the window. "Ho, slave! Pompey!"

"But for me thou mightest have died there! Thy slave left thee lying there like a dead dog, to go and see the city on fire! What to him is thy life? save that thy death would give him opportunity to grow rich by pilfering thee! Oh, Brinsley, no one loves thee like thy poor Kate! I forgive! I forget all! They say I am mad—but it is mad with love! What curse hath turned thee gray?"

"Hist! what has brought thee here! Have I not sworn I would kill thee if thou ever camest near me? By the curse of Cain I will strangle thee if the lady Claudine should see thee!"

The poor lady shook with terror. But she still had command enough of her reason not to betray herself.

"You ask me, Brinsley, why I came hither? Look at my feet! Do they not bleed! Once you have fondled and kissed these feet and called them beautiful as pearl, now crimson with their own blood like those of blessed martyrs, all wounded by the stones of the road I have come to find thee!"

"Who bid thee come?" he demanded, fiercely.

"Love—love for my child! I went where I should find him and found him not! The good people told me that he had been taken away! Where hast thou taken him! Hast thou slain him, Brinsley?"

"No. I have not seen him! I know not where he is! Why do you come to me? I have not seen thy son this ten years! Why comest thou to me! Have I not given thee fifty pounds a year, this ten years, so that I hear no more of him. I have not asked thee where thou hast lived with him, nor have I wished to know! What ask you? More gold! I have none for thee! Depart, woman!"

"No, not more gold! But I have come to ask thee if thou hast stolen away my boy!"

"I swear to thee I know him not even by sight should he meet me! I know nothing of him. If he has fled, let him go! I am glad of it. May he never more be heard of!"

"Ah, Brinsley, can your heart be so hard! God has whitened your head. Has he made your soul white also? Once you loved me and my child! But by and by you saw another, and therefore hated us? Before Heaven's white throne I was your wife, though you deceived me and let one of your wicked friends act the priest, clad in the sacred vestments of the church of God! By falsehood and deception you won me; but in truth and innocence I accepted you, not knowing the trap you set for me. In the Book of God's remembrance,"—here the injured woman raised her bare arm and solemnly pointed her finger to Heaven; "it is written down with the pens of angels that I am your wedded wife! But I come not to reproach you! The sight of you fills me with joy and fear! Oh, that you could love me and our son again! But—I am mad when I ask this! *You* said I was mad! and you ought to know, for it was your cruel, cruel treatment that drove me mad! You ought to know! And when your great oaths sent me to Bedlam, to live among the mad, that I might become madder with their madness, I ceased not to pray for you! And by and by, after years, when they let me out as harmless and I found my child, and you promised to give fifty pounds a year to us both, if I would promise that you should never hear of nor see us again, I was glad and consented to it! And you know I haven't troubled you! I saw you from a secret corner in the church at Welton, wedded to the beautiful Claudine Heathcoate, sister of Lord Argyll and Sir Charles, one of the noblest born ladies in the land of England, and yet I put my hand upon my mouth and let you go your ways without a curse, with your new bride—although I knew my place was on that arm, and that those flowers strewn by the villagers ought to have fallen at my feet instead of at those of lady Claudine. I did not see her then, for she was veiled; but I knew she was beautiful! And you used to say I was beautiful, Brinsley——"

"Stop this talking, and go away. I am in no humor to have you here! As for your son, I know nothing about him! But if you come near me again I will seek him out, and by this hand! will not let him live an hour after!"

"Thou liest! Thou knowest where he is, and hast known where he has been for the last ten years! You cannot deceive me. A mad brain has supernatural power, and can see things spiritually as angels perceive and know all things! I can read the soul, being mad, as an open book. Lie not to me, Brinsley. Thou hast not lost sight of our child! I saw thee in disguise three times visit the place I put him! and each time when I removed him to one securer, thou didst find him out. And where he last has been for three years I have seen thee disguised come thither to see him, unknown to him and others, that thou mightest, for some evil purpose, ever keep thine evil eyes upon his retreat. And when yesterday I escaped from the Asylum for the Insane, where lately thou hast sent me a fourth time, I sought my child, for I still loved him (for madness is in the *head*, Brinsley, and touches not the *heart*, they told me he was *not!* And when in my distress and cries I demanded my child, the poor people would only tell me that "the dark man with the whiskers had been there, and left suddenly in the night, and that in the morning my son was gone, none knew whither! By the dark man I knew they meant thyself, for with all thy disguises, thy visits each year to him, unknown to him, have been detected by me! Now, Brinsley Oakes, with thy hoary head, lie no more! Give me up our son!"

The conscience-smitten man walked to and fro his room with an agitated and angry step. Three times he stopped to look in the mirror as if unable to realize the change that had passed over his head. Suddenly he paused before her.

"Katherine Cecil——"

"Oakes!" she answered, in a loud imperative tone. "I am Katharine Oakes! Cecil is my maiden name, but I am thy wedded wife before God!"

"Nay, then, if thou'lt be quiet, Katharine Oakes be it! Your son is safe. In a few days you will find him again at the shepherd's hut. I took him away, but not to harm him—but for his good! You shall see him in a week's time!"

"Swear it!"

"I swear it!"

"Nay—don't swear it, Brinsley! for thy oath is sure to be broken! Didst thou not swear to me that you loved only me! But that is past! Give me your word upon this cross of blood that I shall see my boy in a week."

Here she rapidly scratched upon her white arm with a needle a cross from every part of which the red blood oozed. "Lay thy finger upon this cross and promise me I shall have my son alive and well in one week!"

Brinsley hesitated! His hand trembled, and he would have refused but that he saw a wild and ungovernable expression in her face which warned him that he could not safely refuse if he wished to save a scene that might attract witnesses. He, therefore, placed his finger upon the bleeding cross and said—

"Katharine, I promise. But you must now depart!"

Without another word, she gathered her mantle about her, and casting a wild and searching look into his face, bounded from the window and was the next moment seen by him descending the distant steps and crossing like a gray spectre the shadows of the court-yard.

"Slave!" he called fiercely, to the African whom he saw at the opposite end of the gallery.

"Massa!" answered the negro, startled at seeing him upon his feet whom he had supposed to be asleep upon the floor; for the obtuseness of his perceptions led him to see no difference between sleep and insensibility. "I tink massa sleep. Me go look de fire!"

"Asleep? I never sleep; for when deepest I sleep deeper am I buried in the torture of despair," he said to himself. "Follow yonder woman, and see that she leaves Bath ere you come back! I would give a thousand pounds to see her noisy head off her shoulders!"

Ah, Brinsley Oakes,! you did not thus talk when seventeen years before, when you were three-and-twenty, you first beheld Katharine Cecil at a ball given by your commanding officer at Greenwich barracks! Her brilliant style of beauty—her haughty and queenly carriage—her wit, and the splendor of her intellectual eyes—all fired your imagination, and took captive your heart! When you were told that she was the only daughter of a brave East Indian General, and was allied by descent with the noblest families of the kingdom, though born in the oriental empire of the crown, your soldierly pride led you the more vividly to picture her charms! The ceaseless summer of the East had given fire to her eyes and softness to her cheek; and to your intimate associates that night after returning from the ball to your mess, you pronounced her the most beautiful creature on earth! You toasted her the next day as the "Eve of a new Eden;" you toasted her the day after as the Hebe of Herefordshire; and the week following you spoke of her as the Niobe of naiads! and again she was the seraph of beauties—a Minerva in dignity—a Juno in style—a Venus in passion; a Cleopatra in splendor—a Ruth in gentleness—a madonna in purity and devotion!

And so, with art, with vows, with love, with passion, with deceit—by fraud, by false oaths, by treachery, you won her! You gave the honorable name of wife to one whom you knew was not your wife; and she believing herself your wife yielded to you her heart, her honor, her eternal happiness! Traitor to all that God had pronounced sacred, you deceived a weak woman, and rejoiced in your victory! Without doubt you loved her, as purely as your nature could love! But love's conquest by fraud can never survive!

But we will not by apostrophising unfold to the reader the dark chapters of crime connected with the past life of this evil man! but fairly tell the dark tale as briefly as words will allow.

The proud and beautiful girl, through whose veins flowed the richest blood of England, was fascinated by the manly beauty, the powers of conversation, and military prestige of the young officer who knelt at her feet and flattered her with all the graces of language that devotion to beauty could command. She consented to become his wife. But, unable to support a wife, the young man had no intention of marrying; but madly enamored, he felt that his very existence depended upon being the sole object of her love.

Trusting, loving, believing, the beautiful girl, unaccustomed from childhood to control, and, withal, wilful in temper, contrary to the counsel of wiser heads, accepted his proffers of marriage. The day was set for their private nuptials. The corrupt sexton of a village church was bribed to open the doors at an untimely hour. A vicious and unprincipled associate of the young officer, acted the part of the rector; and by a false marriage (yet one in good faith on the part of the bride) Katharine Cecil was betrayed. It was not until after the birth of a son, the year following, that she learned the truth. Being ordered to the East Indies with his regiment, the false lover and perjured man coldly informed her that he could not any longer take the responsibility of protecting her. In a word, he told her that she was not his wife!

Our pen is inadequate to portray the scene that followed! A proud, high spirited woman, beautiful to a marvel, and believing herself the wife of the man she loved, and to whom she had sacrificed all dear to her honor and her life, to be suddenly cast down to the dust, guilty without guilt, a sinner without sin, wife without wedlock, a mother without a husband! was a blow too heavy for her reason to rally under. From that hour she was a changed woman! Her mind wandered, and insanity slowly, but surely, set his seal upon her intellect.

Brinsley Oakes sailed for India and soon in other pursuits hushed the voice of conscience which would have drawn his thoughts to the wretched victim he had deserted so heartlessly and wantonly! If in the world hereafter, the judge of men holds in reserve one sentence of a kind more fearful than all others, it awaits the head of the man who breaks a trusting woman's heart, ship-wrecks her reason, and says "am I not in sport?"

In India, after some years fighting there bravely and being promoted for his courage (for bad-hearted men may do good sevice with their swords in war) he became acquainted with the father and brothers of Claudine Heathcoate. From them he learned that they had a fair sister in England; and their unsuspecting conversation one day in his tent about her, inspired him with a desire irresistible to see her, and as he was soon to return to England, he placed her name and address upon his tablets; but not until he had heard it said that her uncle, General Heathcoate, one of the richest Nabobs in Bengal, intended to make her and her brothers his heirs.

At length Brinsley Oakes reached England and retired on half-pay, and with the reputation of a brave soldier. His private character, in its real features, he kept carefully concealed. It is true in India it was whispered that he was unprincipled, and that he was addicted to the gaming table. But Argyll and Charles Heathcoate, without ever hearing of these rumors, took, after a brief acquaintance with him, an instinctive dislike to him; not from anything he said or did that they could put their finger upon; but from certain ways he had of speaking of woman, and from an unpleasant, sinister tone in which he indulged when other men were praised. The reason why they could not tell, but like him they did not.

When, therefore, a year or two afterwards they learned that he had married Claudine, their beautiful and only sister, their chagrin and indignation knew no bounds. They wrote to her complaining of her want of confidence in them, in not writing and asking their counsel in a matter in which they were so deeply and tenderly interested.

But neither got she this letter, nor any others they wrote to her; for the same secret and wicked hand which had intercepted her first letters to them, informing her brothers of her attachment to Brinsley Oakes, and asking their consent, intercepted all returning ones! for Brinsley Oakes knew, as by instinct, that he was not liked by the brothers, and that if the question was referred to their decision they would reply in the negative.

About two years after this marriage the death of her uncle, as we have said in a former chapter, rendered Claudine Oakes the wealthiest young married lady in England. And the following spring her brothers returned, the eldest with the title of Lord Argyll, derived from his uncle, and the second with the rank of a baronet, into which he came at his maturity by right of his mother's, Lady Alice Heathcoate's, brother, with a noble estate to which it appertained.

These two gentlemen were not long in seeing that the career of Captain Oakes would soon end in infamy and ruin; and so far as lay in their power, they, by their advice, sought to protect him from the certain fatal issues to which affairs were tending.

It was the names of these men, the reckless Brinsley Oakes had had, at least the name of one of them, the temerity to forge; knowing their dislike and contempt for him; and because he was fully aware of their feelings, was he now so desperate in providing money to replace before it could be discovered, what he had drawn out by forging Sir Charles's name. He knew that a relative by marriage once made an enemy, reconciliation and restored confidence was almost impossible. He felt he would rather fall into the hands of a stranger than into the power of his wife's brothers.

The reader is now as fully acquainted with the past incidents that bear upon our Tale, as is necessary to enable him to go forward with intelligence and interest in the scenes that follow.

Without doubt, Lady Claudine loved her elder brother, Lord Argyll, and her younger brother, Sir Charles, but their advice was not followed, because she loved blindly, also, her unworthy husband, at least, had done so up to the day on which our story opens; and only the revelations since made have shaken fully her confidence. But now her eyes were opened! But we will not anticipate. We return to Brinsley Oakes. The words which he had spoken, "Would that some one would bring me her head," in reference to the beautiful maniac mother, his victim, we have said he would not always have used; for once he truly loved her. But now hatred of her, and a sudden desire to destroy her, lest she should cross the path of Lady Claudine, came upon his soul. He hardly, fully meant the murderous wish which he uttered, in the hearing of the African; and yet, as he turned away from the piazza, and re-entered the library, he cursed her deeply in his heart. As day touches night, as light and darkness blend in the twilight of their separation, so love and hatred touch in their boundaries.

Since his return from India he had found out his injured wife, (for wife she was in the sight of Heaven!) not by accident, but from a morbid desire to know what had become of her and of his son. During the years of his absence he had not heard from her, yet had not forgotten her; for the guilty, though outwardly indifferent to their crimes, have a lively remembrance of them in their consciences.

It was, therefore, with a morbid curiosity that Brinsley Oakes sought out his former victim; and not until many weeks' search did he learn that a young woman answering his description was last seen wandering on Salisbury plain with a party of gypsies.

The next evening, at twilight, he found himself, accompanied by his African servant, on horseback, after a ride of several miles, in the vicinity of the ruins of the gigantic Druidical temple, which, about a mile distant to the south of him, lifted in solemn majesty their dark basaltic columns towards the skies.

Save these mysterious circles of stone, and the spire of Salisbury Cathedral piercing the horizon, leagues away, with the fineness of a needle, so remote was it, all around the horseman was a boundless plain; the few shepherds' cots, here and there sprinkled over its surface, scarcely being visible with their low roofs above the fern that grew about them.

But we will reserve to another chapter the scenes we are about to present to the eyes of the reader, which now are about to take place, and in which Brinsley Oakes was the chief participator; scenes, we remind the reader, that he passed through *before* his marriage with Claudine Heathcoate, and about seven weeks after his return from India, with the secret purpose of endeavoring to secure as his wife the presumptive heiress of the Bengalee general and nabob. The next chapter, therefore, as well as the last half column or so of this one, is retrospective, in order to fill up outlines in the past that we have only sketched or hinted at in passing; and as a complete understanding of the past in its details will be necessary to a more intelligent sympathy with the whole story yet to come, we temporarily intermit, therefore, the direct progress of the Tale, to give our attention, for a chapter or two, to events anterior to the time of its commencement.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

AN INCIDENT OF WELLINGTON.

In the neighborhood of his father's residence, in the county of Meath, the future duke of Wellington, then a lad, was one of a party which, after the manner of the times, had indulged in free potations until a late period of the night. Mr. Wellesley—or, as the name then was, Wesley—managed to escape from his companions, and, retiring to his bed, fell fast asleep. His absence was observed, and his retreat discovered. It was determined that he should return. One of the party, more or less drunken than the rest, snatched up a loaded pistol, and, carefully drawing the ball with which it was loaded, proceeded to the bedside to discharge the powder at the head of the sleeper. He fired. Mr. Wellesley was, of course, awoke, and was forced to get out of bed, dress himself, and was brought back in triumph to the party. In the morning, however, it was found that the ramrod of the pistol had passed through the pillow, close by where the head of the future conqueror of Napoleon must have been. With all the care his assailant had taken to draw the ball, he had left, unconsciously, in its place, the ramrod; and but that the same potations that confused his perceptions unsteadied his hand—when he pointed the pistol at the young sleeper's head—that might have ended the career of the Hon. Arthur Wellesley.

MAXIMS FOR MARRIED LADIES.

1. Avoid all thoughts of managing a husband.
2. Never try to deceive or impose upon his understanding, nor give him uneasiness, but treat him with affection, sincerity, and respect.
3. Remember that husbands, at best, are only men, subject, like yourselves, to error and frailty. Be not too sanguine, then, before marriage, or promise yourselves happiness without alloy.
4. Should you discover anything in your husband's humor or behavior not altogether what you expected or wish, pass it over; smooth your own temper, and try to mend his attention, cheerfulness and good nature.
5. Never reproach him with misfortunes, which are the accidents and infirmities of human life; a burden which each has engaged to assist the other in supporting, and to which both parties are equally exposed; but, instead of murmurings and reflections, divide the sorrow between you; make the best of it, and it will be easier to both.
6. It is the innate office of the softer sex to smooth the troubles of the other.
7. Resolve every morning to be cheerful that day; and should anything occur to break your resolution, suffer it not to put you out of temper with your husband.
8. Dispute not with him, be the occasion what it may; but much rather deny yourself the trifling satisfaction of having your own will, or gaining the better of an argument, than risk a quarrel, or create an heartburning, which it is impossible to foresee the end of.
9. Implicit submission in a man to his wife is very disgraceful to both; but implicit submission in a wife to the just will of her husband is what she promised at the altar; what the good will revere her for, and what is in fact the greatest honor she can receive.
10. Be assured a woman's power, as well as her happiness, has no other foundation than her husband's esteem and love, which it is her interest, by all possible means, to preserve and increase.
11. Enjoy with him his satisfaction, share and soothe his cares, and with the utmost assiduity conceal his infirmities.
12. If you value your own and your husband's ease, let your expenses and desires be ever within the reach of his circumstances; for if poverty should follow, you must share the evil.
13. Be careful never to give him any cause of jealousy.
14. Let not many days pass without a serious examination into your conduct as a wife; and if on reflection you find yourself guilty of any foibles or omissions, the best atonement is to be more careful in future.

If these rules were printed in letters of gold, and hung in a conspicuous place in every house, it would not be a greater honor than they deserve, or one more calculated to remind wives in a respectful and delicate manner of the seriousness and importance of the engagement they have undertaken to perform.

NAPOLEON AT WATERLOO.

Napoleon, when he had seen his Old Guard recoil, felt his great heart sink. Several times he changed color, and looking on the field with that wondering gaze that seems to expect to banish some hideous vision, he panted for breath, and caught at his words for utterance. "The guard! the guard!" said he: "*ils sont mêles!*" (they are mingled in a heap)! It is said that at this awful moment the officers around him observed such a gloom coming over that expressive face of passion that they expected him every moment to yield to some sudden burst of fury and desperation. He had measured himself with Wellington, and, like the too daring Hotspur, his long career of glory had been frustated in a single field. They even say that he wanted to plunge with his horse amidst the crumbled guard, and perish with his glory. But Bertrand, or Soult—for the trait is attributed to both alternately by different writers—laid hold of the bridle, and turning the horse around, exclaimed: "Your majesty must not go there; the enemy are already fortunate enough." Those who say that he fled from the field do him injustice; they forget the man they are speaking of. When he had seen the battle lost, his army in a tangle of confusion, not a regiment, not a company together—what had he to do but to return with the wind to Paris?

But before he flees look at him as he takes his last long look at that terrible ground! Can it be possible that it is he, Napoleon, the conqueror of kingdoms, the world's hero, greatest of men since Cæsar, who has been defeated, crushed, annihilated in one battle? Is *he* the fugitive? Is that routed army his? What, his? Where are the proud eagles that seemed to live themselves as they gave life to those stalwart grenadiers whose long gray arms lifted them up into the air? What is the drum doing now to inflate the soldiers heart? It is torn and silent on the field, so is the arm that used to beat it so gaily. Where are the close columns that formed a rampart about their leader as he moved along? Where is that solemn, measured tread that shook the earth as ten thousand feet came down upon it in harmony and awe?

Look at the mighty spirit as he contemplates the scene of desolation. Is this the end of so many battles and campaigns? Is this the result of so many vigils, schemes and enterprises? Has he wasted a long life of action for this? Is it for this he perverted the revolution, and bartered the liberties of mankind? Oh, it was a terrible fall to soar so high, and then to drop down suddenly like a wounded bird shot by the fowler! Who shall paint that maddened look of grief and woe as he sits crumpled half up on his charger, whose pride of glory is gone, like his master's? Noble animal! look, look how he stands up in the air paralyzed with shame! for he carries Napoleon, and has never learned to flee!

A VALUABLE OPINION.

Mrs. Washington, the wife of him who was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," used to say, "It is perhaps more desirable that young ladies should play, sing, and dance, only so well as to amuse themselves and their friends, than to practice these arts in so eminent a degree as to astonish the public; because a great apparent attention to trivial accomplishments is liable to give a suspicion that more valuable acquisitions have been neglected. And as they consist in an exhibition of the person, they are liable to be attended with vanity, and to extinguish the blush of youthful timidity, which is in young ladies the most powerful of their exterior charms. And I am also satisfied that, if a young woman cannot partake of the amusements of a ball-room, except at the expense of benevolence, of friendship, of diffidence, of sincerity, of good humor, at the expense of some Christian disposition, some Christian virtue, she has no business there. The recreation to others may be innocent; but to her it is certainly a sin."

CLAUDE PERCY.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

O'er the wide, blue waste of the starlight sea
  How oft shall I gaze in vain?
While some sighing angel whispers to me:
  He will never come again!
I have learned the silence of proud despair
  From my worshiped one and lost;
But faint is the smile that my pale lips wear,
  And my heart is passion-tost.

In his proud earl-father's castle halls
  What a vision met my sight,
Where, with statue grace, 'gainst the pictured walls,
  He stood in the shaded light!
The marble forms of the gods of old,
  That Claude Percy dreamed beside,
Seemed not of purer, more faultless mold—
  But his line's ancestral pride

Flung its icy blight on the boy's high heart!
  Ah, his deep, dark, long-lashed eye
Flashed a restless light as, with lips apart,
  Half breathless I glided by.
Alas, nor title, nor gold was mine;
  And well might my cheek burn red,
When he turned from the song, the mirth and wine,
  And sued for my smiles instead.

My heart beat wild when he breathed my name,
  For dark was his mother's brow;
But a charmless and lofty lady came,
  With air I remember now;
So you never join in the dance? she said
  One so splendid might be gay—
Inclining slightly his haughty head,
  Claude Percy turned away.

As well the statues that stood around,
  Sublime with motionless grace,
Inspired by the music's stirring sound,
  Had suited the dancer's place!
He was so proud—but he loved me well;
  He'd have left his titles and lands
In a lowly home, with me to dwell—
  But—his blood dyes hearts and hands.

His mother's vow—thrice one dreary night—
  In a mist of wild, dark dreams—
I saw his eye with a cold, dim light;
  And—and there were crimson streams
Gushing o'er his midnight cloud of curls,
  And the lip I had kissed was white,
And a youth, with beauty like a girl's,
  Stood by—and his steel flashed bright.

Forget not the dark deed, thou Heaven above,
  Nor how for that fearful prize
His sister Edith, a bride, looks love
  In her page's violet eyes!
Ah, though they may writhe a scornful smile,
  Is Claude Percy's blood forgiven?
No—no—from the grove where we met erewhile
  Unavenged, it cries to Heaven.

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THE TWO HOMES.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

"Put away your bonnet, Alice; you can not go to school this morning."

The speaker was a tall, rather stout lady, handsomely dressed, and with a well-satisfied expression upon her not uncomely features. She sat beside the window of a pleasantly shaded dining-room, and the table by her side was heaped with pretty dresses, laces, gauzes and all the paraphernalia of party costume.

The person addressed was a girl of about thirteen summers—sallow, angular, and awkward after the manner of the race of school-girls. But she had brilliant dark eyes and a broad, smooth brow. To the first rose up glittering tears that were not suffered to fall, to the last came—for one moment only—an ugly frown as she laid aside her bonnet and armful of books and prepared to do her aunt's bidding.

The habit of obedience was strong with this young girl, evidently, for she yielded in silence to an unwelcome mandate.

"All these things are to be looked over and prepared for the party to-night," said Mrs. Sydney, "and it is quite impossible that I should get through them all in time. So I see no way but for you to stay this morning and help me."

"Yes, aunt," answered Alice, "but if you would let me go to school this morning, could I not do all that is required after dinner? You know we are preparing for examination, and my principal lessons come this morning."

"I can't help that," answered Mrs. Sydney, angrily. "The work is to be done, and you must do your share of it. Clara must go shopping this morning, and Louisa has her music-lesson and two hours practice to fill up her time. Clara is going on an equestrian party this afternoon, and some of her young friends will return with her to tea. So what is done must be done this morning. The most work is required on your own tarletane dress. You have grown so much since last winter that it must be let down in the skirt, and that will make it necessary to alter all this trimming."

"But, aunt, if I can do the rest this afternoon, I will stay at home, or wear my white muslin ——"

"There, Alice Everson! Don't let me hear another word. If I am willing to give you a home and all the privileges that I give my own daughters, it seems to me the least you can do is to obey me without so much complaining and opposition. Nobody shall have it to say that I kept you at home from this party, or that you are not as well dressed as Louisa. Can you understand that?"

"Yes, aunt," Alice replied, softly, and smothering her tears and her keen disappointment she took up the pretty dress with its handsome trimmings, and, while her busy little fingers darted to and fro as she worked upon the soft fabric, she tried to believe that her aunt was very kind—oh, far kinder than the willful girl she appeared deserved. But, argue as she would, somehow she could not *feel* that this was so. She knew that Clara's shopping, provided she would forego flirtations across counters with spruce clerks, and saunterings along the shady side of the village street with any chance beau who offered to carry her parasol, need not occupy an hour; while Louisa's two hours of pretended practising would be mainly devoted to a drumming of old lessons sufficient to deceive her mother's unscientific ear, while the young lady perused the fascinating pages of the novel that she carried shut within the covers of her music-book. And that the daughters might spend their morning in this way, the niece "kept from charity," as she bitterly repeated to herself, must stay at home, miss her lessons, lose her standing in the classes, and perhaps the prizes which she had been striving so hard to win at the approaching examination.

Meanwhile the hours wore away. Mrs. Sydney went out and in, giving orders in the kitchen and overlooking the chambermaid's weekly sweeping, one moment preparing a pudding with her own hands, the next coming back to arrange a trimming, or take a few stitches with marvelous alacrity. Clara came back, tired and heated, and with a cross frown upon her pretty inane face, and scolded Alice, and made impertinent speeches to her mother. And from the distant parlor came the faint sounds of Louisa's monotonous drumming upon the piano-forte, quickly exchanged for the stirring march she was learning, whenever any footsteps went that way.

Through all Alice stitched away wearily but swiftly, finished her own dress, arranged Clara's berthe and lace jupon, and the deep falls of black lace upon Louisa's pink silk.

"Alice really has surprising taste," said Mrs. Sydney. "If I had not given her a home, and placed her on an exact equality with my daughters, as I have, which, of course, precludes the possibility of such a thing, she would have made an excellent milliner."

"She might as well have been left to become a milliner," answered Clara, tartly. "Very little gratification she shows for all you bestow upon her! She has just been telling me that she would willingly have stayed at home this evening, if she might have gone to school this morning. It is always 'school' and 'lessons' with her, when we want her to do anything, or when she can make any return for the benefits you heap upon her."

"Hush, Clara," said Mrs. Sydney. "Ingratitude, we all know, is wrong and sinful. If Alice sometimes is ungrateful we must hope that she will better appreciate our kindness as she becomes older, and understands what a privilege she enjoys in such a home, and in being treated exactly like her cousins."

The eyes of mother and daughter were fixed upon the downcast face of the girl during this speech, but there was no reply—only a deep crimson flush upon her sallow cheek, a quivering of her red lips, and one indignant glance from her strangely brilliant eyes, instantly quenched by the tears that *would* come.

In the afternoon Alice was permitted to go to school, but the labor and intense suppressed excitement of the morning had brought on one of the terrible nervous headaches to which she was subject. She was not able to study, scarcely to endure the soft, suppressed hum of the school-room. The teacher, Miss Gilbert, pitied her evident suffering, made her lie down upon the sofa in the little ante-room, and laid her own handkerchief, wet in ice-cold water, upon her burning brow, while Andrew Lemoine, when he came in to recite his French lesson, and saw her lying there, ran home to get some belladonna from his mother, such as he knew always relieved *her* headaches. To have seen how Alice's languid eyes sparkled, how her mouth lost its hard lines of pain, and wreathed itself into a sweet, soft smile, as she thanked those who offered these kindnesses, would have forever acquitted her of the charge of ingratitude.

When school was dismissed she went slowly homeward, supported on either side by Andrew Lemoine and his sister Jane. At the gate of Mrs. Sydney's mansion they left her, but before they were out of hearing, the tones of Mrs. Sydney's sharp voice reached them.

"Come home with a headache, eh? Well, go to bed at once; keep on taking that belladonna every half hour, and I will send Patty with some warm water to bathe your feet. You *must* get over it in time to go to the party, or people will say—"

What that mysterious accuser the "people" would say, was lost to the listeners by the shutting of the door. They did not see the formal obedience with which Alice obeyed her aunt's directions, which, being given without sympathy or love, awakened no grateful response, brought no gleam to the dim eyes, no smile to soften the pain-contracted mouth. They did not know that the fussy, unloving attentions, bestowed only that she might be well enough to justify Mrs. Sydney's ostentatious benevolence that evening, while they at last relieved the physical pain, wounded, and bruised, and inflicted hard pangs upon the girl's sensitive spirit. They did not hear the bitter exclamation of the grief she felt, but scarcely herself comprehended.

"Oh, mother, mother, why did you not live? or why did I not die when you were taken from me?"

An elegant house, costly furniture, luxurious viands, and rich garments, all these Alice had, but without love there was no home for the child. A loving injustice would have been very sweet, far sweeter, than the stern measure of her claims for the world's eye, while her inner life was unblessed by sympathy.

As the girl lay there in her pleasant room, darkened to soft gloom, the subsiding pain brought no repose, but an intense activity of the brain, and her thoughts were very busy with her past life, and with the oft-repeated, vain effort to solve the deep mystery of her future. One thing she knew she should do, because she could not help doing it, and that was, to go out into the world and earn her own livelihood, as soon as she should be old and wise enough. How this was to be accomplished she had as yet but a very vague idea. But that it should be done, she knew, if God spared her life.

Thinking so deeply of the past, the present, and the future, all distinct ideas mingled at last in a soft bewilderment that was not quite slumber, but an exquisite languor, and she murmured,—

"If mamma were but here to kiss my eyelids, as she used, I should sleep, perhaps, and then awake so well. But Aunt Clara will not kiss me."

A soft sigh followed, then, perchance, her soul's invocation brought spirit-lips with their soft touch upon her closed eyelids, and she was floating away into the pleasant land of dreams, lulled by the music of that mother's voice, enclosed in the tender embrace of that mother's arms, in a deeper happiness than ever came to her waking hours.

A light flashed across her closed eyelids, a loud, somewhat harsh voice grated upon the ear in which harmonies that seemed divine were sounding, and she awoke.

"Are you awake, Alice? Patty brought up your tea, half-an-hour ago; but as she thought you were asleep she did not disturb you. I have brought you a fresh cup of green tea. Drink it, and see if you are not well enough to get up." And Mrs. Sydney held the light where it fell full upon poor Alice's eyes, as she opened them with a bewildered gaze, and she bustled about the room, making a great deal of noise, and talking loudly all the time.

Alice felt as if she had been recalled from Paradise; nevertheless she drank the tea, and ate the dainty bit of toast her aunt had brought her, and thanked her in the proper words that *would not* come from a heart which tried to feel grateful. Then, though dizzy with the recent pain, she arose and prepared for the party, thinking that the only return in her power for her aunt's attentions.

She went to the party, talked, and danced, and tried to eat, that she might not appear singular, and thus gain her aunt's disapproval; came home tired, utterly weary, and languid, slept—disturbed, unrestoring sleep, and rose, next morning, all unfitted for the school duties she was so anxious to fulfil. Yet by hard study far into the hours that should have been given to sleep, she regained all she had lost, outstripped all competitors, and won the prizes she coveted (not sweeter than the knowledge she desired) at the approaching examination. But she had gone far beyond her strength—mind and body had been overtasked, and one morning Mrs. Sydney found her insensible at the breakfast hour, in the bed from which she rose no more for many weeks.

All through this long sickness every attention was lavished upon her. The best physicians came daily to consult upon, and prescribe for her case; an expensive nurse was installed in her chamber; the rarest fruits and nicest food tempted her unwilling appetite; the bell was muffled—the piano-forte locked—the servants wore list-slippers, and moved with cat-like tread; and Mrs. Sydney and her daughters wore sad, downcast looks, that simulated the sorrow which they had supposed "people" would expect them to feel at the danger of the adopted daughter of the house. But aunt and cousins went only to the chamber of sickness at stated hours, with formal inquiries upon their lips.

Through many weeks of delirium and unconsciousness, Alice cried continually "mother, mother!" and the cry was stilled only when Miss Gilbert stole softly to her bedside, and laid her cool hand upon the burning brow, no longer shaded by the dark curls that, in the first hour of danger, had been sacrificed. But hope and reason came back at last, and through this mighty struggle with disease the child came forth a conqueror. Came back to the life from which, in the days of her convalescence, this illness seemed a wide dividing gulf. Came back from delirious dreams of her mother and mother-love, to the cold, cheerless, unsunned existence, with its outward splendor and its inward ashiness, that she knew she must live yet a little longer. She was well and strong at length, and all went as before, save that Mrs. Sydney contemplated all she had done for the sick child with such a comfortable complaisance, that she more than ever forgot to give her any portion of regard.

"I cannot, Andrew, indeed I cannot. Do not urge me more."

"But we are so young, Allie! Are you *sure* that you can never love me?"

"Very, very sure, Andrew, that I cannot be your wife. And I am so sorry," she added, with a sweet simplicity, "that I cannot love you more than a sister, as I always have, since you seem to wish it so much."

"But, Alice, I can wait for years if you will give me hope. Come," he added, seeing that she was silent—"Come, now, to the home I will give you; a humbler one than this, it is true, but made beautiful by love."

"No, Andrew, I have said I cannot. And don't think I am ambitious for a more splendid home. He who sees all, knows how much misery has been mine amidst all this splendor, and while reveling in all this ostentatious luxury. I am going away, Andrew, to be a governess, to earn my own livelihood by independent labor; but I will never buy a home by fraud, by falsely promising love I cannot give."

All persuasions were vain, and Andrew Lemoine bore away his disappointment to brood over it in his distant city home. And next week Alice Everson left Mrs. Sydney's splendid home, forever. Mrs. Sydney was angry, perplexed, and sad, all at once, when this departure was announced. She was most troubled about what "people" would say, and being really unconscious of any deficiency on her part, was convinced that no person had ever been treated with viler ingratitude.

Alice Everson was a governess. And she was happier than ever she had been since her mother's death. She gave her services for a home and independence, she expected and claimed no love, save that which she sought to win from the little children entrusted to her care.

Carrie and Isabel Stanley were the orphan grand-children of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley. Their parents had both fallen victims to a pestilence that desolated the city of their residence, and the little ones had been saved by sending them to the country home of their grand-parents.

Mrs. Stanley made no objection to the youth of Alice, when she was recommended to her by the pastor of her native village. She wisely thought that a young person would interest and amuse the little ones, and give them that companionship and sympathy which they needed more than regular tuition. When she saw Alice daily winning the love of the little ones, she was charmed with her, and, both by herself and her husband, the girl was treated with a rare kindliness that touched her heart, and brought forth all the repressed beauties of a really genial nature.

Day by day, blessed by the warm affection of her little pupils, and the tender regard of her aged friends, Alice had repeated to herself that she had found a home at last, and believed herself happy. None of her duties were irksome; it was pleasant to impart instruction to her docile little pupils; it was delightful to sit in the cool, shadowy library, and read to Mr. Stanley as he sat leaning back in his high arm-chair, with his silvery hair in strong contrast with its dark velvet cushions, to listen to his comments and explanations, and to receive his ready, instructive answers to her questions; and she loved, most of all, to sit at Mrs. Stanley's feet, and arrange her work, or listen to her stories of the olden time; to her proud descriptions of her absent son, Hubert; her mournful yet resigned allusions to the dear son who had been called early to his rest in Heaven. And yet, in her hours of solitary thought, Alice sometimes reproached herself for a vague, unsatisfied longing, for a deeper, fuller repose in confident affection. She repeated, again and again, the long list of her present blessings, employments and enjoyments, and strove in vain to name that for which she longed.

Soon she learned what it was her soul desired. When Hubert Stanley came home—Hubert the darling son of his parents, the strong, young man who was henceforth to give his youth and strength to the building up of their comfort; Hubert, tall, stately, grave, not at all handsome, but with an expression of earnest goodness that more than compensated for the lack of beauty; Hubert, with his richly cultivated mind, his true, manly heart, Alice was not long in learning what her life needed to perfect its richness. And yet, for long, she only knew that in his presence, within the sound of his deep, melodious voice, or sitting, unseen, gazing upon the play of his features, or the varying expression of his fine eyes, she was very happy, deeply, quietly happy.

What Hubert thought of Alice he imparted to his father and his mother, and then, with their approval, he sought her out and told her the same story, but with some trembling, and with many loving words. And then Alice found her true home at last. Encircled by his arms, blessed by his love, protected by his strength, guided by his wisdom, whom she loved, her heart's home was won. It mattered little to her that her home henceforth rivaled the luxury and splendor of that in which her youth had been passed. Love only made it beautiful to her, just as the lack of love had made the proud mansion of Mrs. Sydney, but little better than a gilded prison to the weary, longing girl.

Mrs. Sydney had given her a home full of comforts and luxuries for the body; in Hubert's love she found her heart's home, her true home, where peace and joy dwelt, where she met ready sympathy, where she never heard the word "ingratitude," nor could have deserved to be called ungrateful, since she so freely and thankfully received that which was so freely and lovingly bestowed as to impart no sense of obligation. And thus she learned the true meaning of that sacred word.

POOR MARY ANN.

This young lady was a choice specimen of the class of women who doat on horrors. In personal appearance she was anything but sentimental-looking, for she was short and fat, and had a round chubby face. The only peculiarity in her countenance that excited marked notice was a rather wild twinkle in her eyes, even when she was quiet, but when excited they rolled with rather alarming rapidity.

Although a robust young woman, she was the most timid of creatures, starting hysterically if her own shadow caught her view, and almost shrieking if she heard the slightest sound. Her nerves were in a perpetual twitter, as if an invisible galvanic battery were constantly pouring its stream of mysterious agitation upon every member of her body. Around, above, and about her the air was peopled with grim demons, bearing off unlucky mortals to terrible undiscovered bournes. Eyes of all colors, shapes, and lustre, peopled the atmosphere of her bed-room; horrible monsters, mankind and beast-kind, gamboled on the floor, and slimy creeping things, with light in their heads, to show their ugliness, crawled along the walls, and hung in clusters on her bed-curtains; yea, even brightly spotted snakes twisted themselves up the coverlet, and breathed hotly upon her face; and loathsome skeletons, in the gray of the morning, danced polkas, and performed other profane tricks, while sometimes the sweet full moon would pour its light through some vapory human ghost, that with extended arm beckoned her menacingly to follow.

Thus tortured in the night, she arose in the morning full of the terrors of an imagination frightfully productive of horrors. It was highly illustrative of the peculiar organization of her mind that she never was troubled with any supernatural visitations from anything that was beautiful or good. No young maiden all in white smiled angelically upon her slumbers; no nice young man cut off in the bloom of manhood ever stood before her, with a bright gold ring in one hand, and the other pointing to a quiet ivy-clad church not far off, with a thrilling expression in a pair of deep brown eyes, sufficient to warm the heart of the coldest coquette. No, all her visions were gloomy, slimy, of bad and nasty things on the earth, and others which fear had placed deep in its bowels.

Such was Miss Mary Ann Jenkins when we knew her first, and for a long time she was a mystery to us—a piece of mortality having something about her indescribably fearful—something disguised in flesh and blood for no good object, we thought. But when we became more accustomed to her society, and had studied her character a little, we found her to be one of those poor self-made miserable women who, having first swallowed the marvelous, had gradually provoked her appetite, until she ravenously bolted the horrible, and that with her eyes wide open and her stock of common sense in an active state.

This monomania embittered her existence, and frequently caused her grievous misery, besides involving her in many ludicrous scrapes.

On one occasion she entered a store for the purpose of making some purchases; but no sooner caught the eye of the young man who bustled forward to serve her, than she started back from the counter, and pointing to the amazed clerk, exclaimed in heart-piercing tones, "Those eyes, I'll swear to them! they were in my chamber last night! Avaunt, deceiver! thou hast no power over me!"

The decorous establishment of Messrs. Flam and Bam stood aghast at such an unequivocal declaration, and the unoffending clerk would have been dismissed on the spot had he not satisfactorily proved an *alibi*. But the incident afforded so much food for mirth to his companions that he was ultimately obliged to resign his comfortable situation and betake himself to a lawyer. Miss Jenkins, acting upon sage legal advice, compromised the matter at a cost which caused her ever after to look upon a merchant's clerk as a villain disguised in good clothes and good looks to entrap the innocent and unwary.

But the most serious adventure in which she was concerned was a love affair which caused her the most acute anguish, for she loved the object of her choice with a devotion unparalleled except in the pages of a romance of the Monk Lewis school. His partiality for her was of a soberer description, but strongly fortified by his knowledge of the property she possessed.

Her courtship was progressing smoothly and satisfactorily enough until a dreadful case of a murder of a wife by her husband came under her notice, and effectually banished from her crazy head all notions of matrimony. The newspapers described the man as a handsome, well-dressed scoundrel, and the industrious writer had taken such pains with the personal appearance of the murderer that he actually gave a minute description of his eyes. "They were," said the accurate scribe, "those kind of visual organs usually found in men of genius who have devoted their talents to the vilest and basest purposes. Their color was so varying and shifting, that it was impossible to tell what color they were; one minute they were deep blue, the next, gray or hazel, and sometimes of a fiery red—but never the same long; and their gaze was ever indirect, looking always above or below, never at an object. They were the most sinister pair of eyes that ever gleamed in a mortal's head, and the most unsophisticated judge of human nature must have instinctively felt that their owner was every inch a villain."

This description powerfully affected Miss Jenkins, and, after a few more interviews, she became satisfied that her lover's eyes were of the same kind, because they were those half-gray, half-blue eyes that reflect a good deal of light, and are usually to be found in men of volatile dispositions. She shuddered upon making the fatal discovery, and resolved to break off all connection with a man who carried such detestable evidences of his character in his head.

But the lover was not to be got rid of so easily. He implored, he entreated, and at last, finding all his importunities useless, complained loudly of her shameful breach of promise, and, threatening exposure, Miss Jenkins was fain obliged to make the mercenary fellow a pecuniary compensation.

This blow paralysed her, for upon an examination of her heart she found she really loved the man; but then, the thought of wedding an ogre, or a vampire, or a ruffian who would not scruple to hand her out of the world in some dreadful and undiscoverable manner, was sufficient to frighten all lingering fondness out of her. She sunk into a moping slave to her fears, and at thirty was found dead in her bed with marks of extreme horror strongly depicted on her countenance.

The death of this silly young woman suggests food for grave thought. How many women like her lead a miserable existence through an early neglect of the culture of their understandings, and afterwards being permitted to gratify a morbid taste, which, in course of time, morally and mentally unfits them for the performance of the great duties of life

The abstract quality of fear is natural and useful to the sex, but that craven feeling which saps the foundation of all confidence and reliance upon self is an acquired disease frightfully exasperative of others. It is the child of ignorance and neglect, and the promoter of imbecility. A woman so afflicted is liable to be an undutiful daughter, a bad wife, a careless mother, and a worthless member of society. All her energes are relaxed, her mind unfitted for the reception of sound and useful knowledge, her morals untuned, and her whole nature weak and disordered.

◆

"THE HAPPIEST DAY OF MY LIFE."

The ancients certainly made a great mistake in not choosing Niobe for the goddess of marriage. Hymen is by far to jolly; he is all smiles—more of the hyena than the crocodile; whilst Niobe is just as she ought to be—all tears.

There seldom is a marriage that is not a perfect St. Swithin affair. No one—unless he has a soul of gutta percha, thoroughly waterproof—should think of going to a wedding with less than two pocket-handkerchiefs; and, even then, a sponge is better adapted to the "joyful occasion." Men take wives as they do pills—with plenty of water—excepting, indeed, when the "little things are well gilt."

If a kind of matrimonial barometer were kept in each family, and its daily indications as to the state of the weather at the fireside accurately registered, we have no doubt that on the average being taken the following results would be arrived at:—Before Marriage, *Fair*; During Marriage, *Wet*; After Marriage, *Stormy*.

Meteorologically speaking, it would be highly interesting could we arrive at a knowledge of the exact amount of "doo" prevailing during courtship.

Nobody can feel more truly wretched than on the happiest day of his life. A wedding is even more melancholy than a funeral. The bride weeps for everything and nothing. At first she's heart-broken because she's about to leave her Ma and Pa; then, because she hopes and trusts Charles will always love her; and, when no other excuse is left, she bursts into tears because she's afraid he will not bring the ring with him. Mamma too is determined to cry for the least thing. Her dear, dear girl is going away, and she is certain something dreadful is about to happen; and, goodness gracious! she's forgotten to lock the dining-room door, with all the wine and plate on the table, and three strange servants in the house. At church the water is laid on at *eye*-service; indeed, the whole party look so wretched, no one would imagine there was a "happy pair" among them. When Papa gives away his darling child, he does it with as many sobs as if he were handing her over to the fiercest polygamist since Henry VIII.—instead of bestowing her upon one who loves his "lamb," regardless of the "mint" sauce that accompanies her. The bridegroom snivels—either because crying's catching, or because he thinks he ought, for decency's sake, to appear deeply moved—and the half-dozen bridesmaids are sure to be all weeping, because everybody else weeps.

◆

THE BEAUTIES OF AUTUMN.

Every person, perhaps, has a favorite season of the year—some preferring the summer, others the spring, others the winter, and others, like ourself, the golden autumn. The zest of our pleasure is hightened by an infusion of melancholy. Few things are more melancholy than music—none so melancholy as love, which is, in fact, nothing but the consciousness of a desire never to be wholly gratified here below. Love is the eager yearning of the soul after the beautiful, which is but another expression for the infinite. Doubtless the fresh green of spring, when the trees stand in genteel half-dress before the modest sun, is highly refreshing to the mind as well as to the eye. But autumn comes to us decked in a thousand colors, painted partly by the hand of decay. It is beauty on the threshold of the tomb, rendered more beautiful and fascinating by the air breathing upon it from beyond. We fancy we never discovered all its loveliness till then. Death itself is marvelously beautiful, in its eternal silence and composure; it hints the mystery it dares not speak; it seems to have closed its eyes, only that it may indulge in delicious dreams forever. All realities seem nothing compared with the ideal creation which throngs upon the soul in death. An autumn is the threshold of death—nature, soft, balmy, like the thoughts of old age, illuminated by the light of heaven. For this reason we love the autumn, and appear to think and feel in it with greatest ease and delight. It is like the diminutive mummy of an Egyptian feast, bidding us enjoy ourselves rapidly, before we depart hence, and are no more seen.

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DOG STUNG TO DEATH BY BEES.

About a fortnight ago, a bee-fancier in Massachusetts was taking an end-box of honey, when a couple of dogs were looking on. At the time of deprivation, apiarians well know that the bees become frantic with rage, attacking every body and thing with indiscriminate fury, and sacrificing their lives by whole hecatombs on such occasions. The snap, bark and howl of the dogs soon told that they had been attacked; one of them judiciously ran away, and found cover and safety in some brushwood; the other was ordered to be tied up in a crib some fifty yards distant. The apiarian pursued his work, but in a few minutes he heard the tied up dog begin to howl most piteously; he and his man hastened to the spot, where they discovered the poor brute literally covered with bees! The infuriated insects were brushed off with a wing by the thousand, and the dog led immediately into the cellar; he seemed to suffer a good deal, and soon appeared very stiff, but it was expected that on the morrow he would be quite recovered. On the following morning he was visited, and found stretched out on the floor quite dead! He was a valuable hound.

◆

VEGETABLE POISONS.

It so happens that all the most virulent poisons are of vegetable origin. There is the deadly aconite, which kills in small fractions of a grain; and strychnia, a fourth part of a grain of which has killed a wild boar in a few seconds; and prussic acid, so prevalent in many botanical tribes. Then there are the deadly alkalies of hemlock and tobacco, and oxalic acid of treacherous fame; all derived from the vegetable kingdom! And yet the empiric physicmonger, forsooth, imposes on the credulity of an ignorant community by vaunting the innocence of vegetable medicines! Why, before the rapid mortal action of some of the vegetable educts we have mentioned, arsenic, that terror of the mineral kingdom, is innocence itself, and sublimate is impotent.

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High Tide.—The tide of the Bay was unusually high a few mornings since; but the highest tide ever known in this country is considered to be the tide of public opinion, which, for the good of the land, it is to be hoped, may this season be taken at the flood and lead to fortune.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1857.

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AMERICAN WOMEN.

If we were to say it in brief, we should say that American women, composite in their graces and charms, cluster all the highest orders of their sisterhood the world over, and blend in themselves the perfections of their sex. Not like ours were the women of France, or Napoleon would not, when Madame De Stael asked:—"What does France most want?" have replied, "France wants good mothers." American women may have had prototypes, but they were individual or in isolated groups, and not the sex of whole nations or races. Woman has never failed, since the world began, to illustrate, in instances, the glory of her nature—never ceased to manifest the divine in the human. With the regal Esther, yearning to bless her enslaved kindred, and the love-inspired daughter, who suckled her grey-haired father through a prison's bars, there have not been wanting parallels, in all ages, to prove that the angels of God still wander on the Earth, to remind man of Eden, and give him a foretaste of Heaven.

It was not Semiramis and Zenobia, writing their names in blood; not Aspasia, corrupting Athens and making Greece drunk with the wine of her sensuous charms; not Cleopatra, Egypt's beautiful, and the world's most shameless courtesan;—nay! none of these—famous through their unwomanliness and infamy—were illustrators of the glory of their sex—none of these typed American women. Their type was, rather, Penelope weaving amid her maidens, through weary years, the web that shielded her virtue until her royal husband returned from his wars and wanderings to gladden her heart; or courteous Rebecca at the well; or timid Ruth gleaning in the field; or, nobler still, the Roman Cornelia, who, taunted in Rome's decaying age by rivals with her poverty, held up her virtuous children, exclaiming:—"These are my jewels!" Fit woman to have been "mother of the Gracchi," and like whom had all Roman Mothers been, Rome might to this day have boasted an unbroken progeny of heroes.

The stamina of a nation depends on the character of its women. If the mothers are intelligent and virtuous; if they teach nobly—the daughters modesty, industry, simplicity and truth, and the sons justice, patriotism and honor—poverty, bondage and shame can never come upon the land of which the children of such mothers are the most enduring basis and bulwark.

Thank God, the generation that planted the wilderness of the New World with the seeds of surpassing empire—an empire now radiant with light and liberty—had such mothers. Their sons and daughters were the precious freight of the "Speedwell" and the "Mayflower," and, from the landing at Plymouth, through the centuries of peril and sacrifice by which our fathers conquered the wilderness, the savage, and the bitterer father-land oppressor—giving us wealth and fame when they had only poverty and obscurity—the race of noble American mothers has been preserved. Mothers who taught their sons to worship God, to love their country and to honor manhood; who led them to the altars of religion, and cheered them with brave hearts to the battle-field, buckling the shield to each young hero's arm, bidding him return victoriously with, or honestly dead without it.

A noble race are American women—God forbid that they should cease to be such. Nor will they as long as they are taught that the truest beauty, grace, and glory of woman lie in her intelligence, simplicity and virtue. Teach her to love home and country, to honor parents and old age, to practise industry and to respect sacred things; in short, educate her as a daughter fitly to become the wife of a freeman and the mother of freemen, and ages hence, as now, she will eclipse her sex in all the world.

ON THE TOP ROUND.

If the advance of a people in civilization may be judged, as some aver, by their appreciation of the highest development in arts and manufactures, we Americans may claim to stand on the top round of the ladder; for there is nothing exquisite and rare in these directions, that we are not prompt both to appreciate and possess. From the most substantial and economical to the most fanciful and luxurious products—whether for ornament or use—we are bound to be not a whit behind the Old World. If we are not yet prepared to create them, we can import them, for China, and Persia, and India, and the factors of Europe, are glad to lay their genius and skill under tribute to our dollars. Perhaps not yet as affluent in means, or as luxurious in taste, as were the Ninevites and Babylonians, still we enjoy, beyond doubt, a glory of really useful and beautiful arts and manufactures greater, or at least more generally diffused, than any other people ancient or modern.

A saunter through the richly-freighted shops and bazaars that line the great thoroughfare of our city, would afford ample proof of this, especially to one who had traveled observingly through the marts of the Old World. Indeed, in such a saunter, one might easily see that our merchants and traders have compassed a portion of everything rare and beautiful produced by the combined skill and industry of the globe. Our ships have sharp prows and swift keels, and those who wing them venture wherever the genius of trade points the way. And if this be the measure of our accomplishment in the first age of our national existence, what will it be—with human discovery, science and skill, only on the threshold of achievement—when ten centuries shall have passed over our land. Thought is bewildered with the vision of splendor and luxury that opens through such a future.

BAD HUSBANDS.

It is a matter of common complaint that husbands are getting more and more into the habit of cruelly beating their wives, and of behaving with scandalous and even criminal infidelity Some ascribe this unpleasant and disagreeable state of things to the spread of spiritualism, free-love, and kindred bedevilments, whereby the joints and bonds of society generally are loosened, and man's natural selfishness and brutality are brought into freer play; while others ascribe it to the inflexibleness of the marriage tie, and the rigidity of religious dogmas, which have so long bound the hearts and minds and imaginations of men as with bands of iron, and which being now cast off by many, leave them in such a weak and crippled moral condition that they cannot bear up against the temptations which swarm around them. All such reasons as the last are utterly foolish and false, though there is probably much truth in the former. Spiritualism and free-love are making rapid strides; and when men have once given scope to their baser passions it is natural for them to turn upon their innocent and pure wives, and by ill-treating them, expend the fury which conscience and a sense of self-degradation kindle in their bosoms. But the afflicted, in this State at least, may look forward with hope. A bill will be introduced in the next Legislature to protect married women against such outrages, and no doubt the example will be followed in other States. Vice and brutality shall not always go unpunished.

CASH.

There is music in the ring of cash. To the generous nature it sings of comforts bestowed upon the needy, of blessings showered upon the dear ones at home. Who can gaze upon a golden eagle that is his own, without a feeling of pride and pleasure in the possession? If he came by it honestly, no matter what long course of crime it has come through to hands that clutched it before it rested in his palm. It brings with it none of the stains that have smeared the hands of former possessors. "The smell of all cash is good," quoth Vespasian. In cash honestly earned and generously used there lie germs of ever-increasing dignity and honor. Penniless wits may sneer at cash as they please; their shafts fall upon it as harmless as Trojan darts upon the Vulcan-forged shield of Achilles; and besides, they can always be bought over with a small sum, and made to laugh on the other side—and full stomachs. Yes, cash is ever great, and always convenient. The clink of coin and the rustle of bank notes are harmonious and glorious. Therefore, ye sons and daughters of men, put cash in thy purses, and expend it with a prudent hand. Be not niggardly nor lavish in its use, but in the expenditure of gold always seek the golden mean. So shall your possessions increase with your age, and your declining years be passed in independence and comfort.

"SUICIDE OF AN UNKNOWN GIRL."

How often this startling and melancholy announcement stares at us from out the column-record of casualties and deaths. "Suicide of an Unknown Girl:" what a history of blighted hopes, of insupportable disgrace, of a daughter outcast from her father's roof, of suffering and despair, is compressed within that short line. And yet how few there are who experience any emotions of grief or sympathy on reading this oft-printed announcement. It is taken, as a matter of course, with all the rest, and soon blotted from the memory by other records. And yet, what object on earth so demands the heart's best compassion as a poor, betrayed, outcast, homeless girl walking the streets of a great city, without a friend on earth, and not daring to turn her gaze or lift her hopes to Heaven? Such a condition is hard and bitter enough for a man, with all the iron nerve and resource and hardihood of his sex; but for a woman, who can utter its terrors and agony? No wonder that to such a one the smiling waters of the river murmur wooingly; and that with hopes blighted, affections betrayed, heart crushed, body starved, and brain crazed, she leaps to the dark flood's embrace, glad with its aid to escape

"Anywhere, anywhere,
Out of the world!"

THE GRAPE.

While the pulse and blood of monarchy and feudalism are running low in the Old World, the Old World vineyards are also slacking. The royal grape, along the Mediterranean and the Ægean, is dying out. We are threatened with a stopper to our imported goblets, and may not much longer quaff the Esterhazian vintages, nor toy with the juices of the rare clusters of Champaigne, Madeira, Sicily and Cyprus. O, Bacchantean powers! so long lavish of your libations—your Samian and Falernian nectars—why do you shut down, at this late day, the gates of your paradise? But, never mind; if the vine shrivels in the Old World, its pulse begins to throb, and its purple veins to swell right royally in the New. Our vineyards are broadening in all the land. The smile of the sun flashes along their thickening clusters. America is to be the vine-land of the future. And with the universal prevalence of vineyards, the age of drunkenness will pass. The "pure juice" will be quaffed as harmlessly as the pure cluster is eaten. Speed the day, O fates, when the grape shall bloom around every cottage. Plant vineyards, O, husbandman, and find pleasure and profit therein. O, sun, be kind, and descend tenderly ye rains and dews, and breathe warmly ye winds, that our clusters may blush the imperialest purple.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

TRIP TO THE CAATSKILLS.

NUMBER FOUR.

A lack of competition is said to affect progress. That the traveler to the Caatskills has no choice but "The Mountain House," should not, it seems to me, act as an extinguisher to enterprise upon its well patronized landlord. I might make many suggestions as to improvements, by which I am sure he would, in the end, be no loser. It needs no great stretch of the imagination to fancy the carriage which conveys victims to "The Falls," a relic of the Inquisition. I did not know till I had tried it, how many evolutions a comfortably-fleshed woman could perform in a minute, between the roof and floor of such a ve-higgle! (Result—a villainous headache—and the black and blues.) I noticed a small book-shelf in the very pleasant ladies' parlor. "Praise God Barebones," I think, must have made the selection of the volumes. But it is pleasanter to commend than to find fault. I could forgive many short-comings for the privilege of feasting on the wholesome light bread, which to a saleratus-consuming,—saleratus-consumed New Yorker, was glory enough to nibble at. Blessings, too, on the skillful fingers which stirred up those appetizing omelettes, and sublime orange-puddings. What an amusement it is, to be sure, to watch a man when he gets hold of the dish he fancies! What fun to bother him with innumerable questions while he is trying to eat it in undisturbed rapture—meanwhile wishing you at the North Pole. How cynical the creatures are, the last interminable half hour *before* meals, and how sweetly amiable, and lazy, *after*. Then is your time to try men's soles; to insist upon their taking a walk with you, when they can scarce waddle,—when visions of curling Havana smoke invite them to two-legged piazza-chairs, digestion, and meditation. *Then* is your time to be suddenly seized with an unpostponable longing for a brisk game of ten-pins, to test the sincerity of all their disinterested speeches. My dears,—the man who continues amiable while you thus stroke his inclinations the wrong way, may safely be trusted in any matrimonial crisis. I endorse him.

With regard to the Falls it may be a delusion, but I think it is rather a damper to sentiment to fee a man to turn on the water for them! and I know it is a damper to the slippers to go down into the ravine beneath—which, joking aside, is very beautiful, and a great place for a bear to hug you in. Instead of which, I met a young parson whom I knew by token of his very black coat, and very white neck-tie; and who actually pulled from his sacerdotal pocket a profane handkerchief which I had carelessly dropped, presenting it with as much gravity as if he had been giving me "the right hand of fellowship." Heaven help him—so young—so well made—and so solemn!—I felt immensely like a frolic. And speaking of frolics—oh, the mountains I had to leave unclimbed—the "campings out" foregone—and all because I was forcordained to petticoats—hampering, bush-catching petticoats!—all because I hadn't courage to put on trousers, (in which, by the way, I have made several unsatisfactory private rehearsal attempts to unsex myself but nature was too much for me,) and wade knee-deep in moss to see what man alone, by privilege of his untrammeled apparel, may feast his eyes upon. It is a *crying* shame. Ten-pins, too—who can get a "ten-strike" in petticoats? See what I would do at it in a jacket and unmentionables—though I really think nature had no eye to this game when she modeled a woman's hand and wrist. Now I dare say there are strait-laced people who will be shocked at the idea of a woman playing ten-pins. Well—let them be shocked. I vote for it for two reasons: first, for the exercise, when dripping grass and lowering skies deny it to us elsewhere; secondly, because it is always a pleasant sight to see husbands sharing this, or any other innocent recreation, with their wives and daughters, instead of herding selfishly in male flocks. I like this feature of domesticity in pleasure-seeking in our friends, the Germans. I like the Germans. Their joy is infectious. A sprinkling of such spirits would do much towards infusing a little life into the solemn business way in which Americans too often pursue, but seldom overtake, pleasure. Yes—it is a lovely sight to see them with their families! and oh, how much more honorable and just, to a pains-taking economical wife and mother, than the expensive meal, shared at a restaurant with some male companion, while she sits solitary—to whom a proposal even for a simple walk would be happiness, as an evidence of that watchful care which is so endearing to a wife's heart.

Not the least among our enjoyments were our evenings at the Caatskills. When warm enough, promenading on the ample piazza with pleasant friends; when the out-door temperature forbade this, seated in the parlors, listening to merry voices, looking on young and happy faces, or—what is never less beautiful, upon those who, having reached life's summit, did not, for that reason, churlishly refuse to cast back approving, sympathizing glances upon the young loiterers, who were still gleefully gathering flowers by the way.

Then, too, we had music—*heart* music,—from our German friend, Ferdinand Ulrich; whose artistic fingers often, also, gave harmonious expressions upon the piano to our *sunrise* thoughts, before we had left our rooms. Happy they, whose full souls can lighten their secret burdens by the low musical plaint, understood only by those who have themselves loved and suffered! Of how many tried and aching hearts has music been the eloquent voice? The ruffled brow grows smooth beneath its influence; the angry feeling,—calm as a wayward child, at a mother's loving kiss. Joy, like a white robed angel, glides softly in, and on the billows of earthly sorrow she lays her gentle finger, whispering—"Peace—be still!"

Fanny Fern.

PAY UP.

Notwithstanding ancient Pistol's declaration that "base is the slave who pays," we say to everybody who owes, or shall hereafter owe a dime or a million—*pay up*. He who pays not, is not far removed from a villain, while prompt payment covereth a multitude of peccadillos. The "circulating medium" is the life-blood of society, and woe to him who retards its healthful flow; while he who has none of it in his pocket should anxiously set about the acquisition of it in some honest way. There are hundreds of men in New York who never "pay," and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. They wear the shiniest hats, the glossiest coats, the most irreproachable pants and boots; sport elegant jewelry, frequent the opera, are conspicuous in conspicuous places, and yet pay neither landlord nor washerwoman, neither servants nor victimized friends. Such people should be made an example of. They should be dunned in the public streets, and always find a constable sitting at their gate. Finally, if they continue incorrigible, they should be compelled to wear coats in public made of their unpaid bills.

FADING AND FALLING.

The summer has taken up her more delicate treasures and gone, and we feel, as we always do when a friend is taken from us, that we have not half known nor half appreciated the enjoyments that have been within our reach, for it is true as it is sad, that,

"In this dim world of clouding cares,
We rarely know till wildered eyes
See white wings lessening, up the skies,
The angels with us unawares."

Some of us—oh, how many! have gone through this solemn experience during the shining season that has just closed. Blessed are they who are not without hope, and have yet courage and strength to say—

"With our best branch in tenderest leaf
We've strewn the way our Lord doth come;
And, ready for the harvest-home,
His reapers bind our ripest sheaf."

Poor, lonesome mother, missing all day long the prattle of a little voice, and the running about of little feet, it is a small matter to you that the flowers are dying under your windows, and the songs of the birds falling fainter and fainter. Spring time will bring them back. She knows her season, and the fresh furrows will not wait for her in vain.

But when will spring visit the mouldering urn?
Oh, when will day dawn on the night of the grave?

These questions are troubling heaven through the times of new moons and of Sabbaths, and making the sober year more melancholy than all her falling leaves.

When the apples ripen, comes the thought of the hand that will not gather them, and when the oaks and the maples redden along the woods, the memory of the eyes that will look up and see them no more, makes their glory a foolish and vain thing.

The rain that used to make such pleasant music on the roof, has now a new and terrible significance, and the thought of the coming snow is associated with the narrow house that seems at best so cold. The wind knocking at the door seems to be demanding new victims, and not to be asking for a play-fellow as it used to seem to be doing,—but why enumerate?—the whole great world has fallen from beauty to ashes—the sky is leaden and dismal, and there is no excellence in the coming up of the sun.

But there is a paler host than the mourners for children, whose eyes see not the fading grass and the withering flowers—nothing but the white brows and folded hands of the husbands, wives, brothers, lovers, who are gone. These are they who will not be comforted, for all that made life anything to them, is vanished and returns not.

Come to them through the darkness, oh, messengers of peace, and assure their faltering souls that the same voice that called from them their beloved ones, speaks all the promises. "The self-same wind unbinds the winter snow, and comforts violets in their hermitage."

In their own time all seasons are beautiful—and this of wailing winds and withering woods, is not the least so; corn-fields and orchards, unyoked cattle, and stubble lands reminiscent of harvests, make all the wide country a pleasing prospect, and if, when we gather the lambs into our folds before the falling of the winter storms, we leave some without, we must remember that the good Shepherd will provide for them more abundantly than our best love knows how to ask; shall we not, therefore, learn how to say and to feel—

So, even for the dead I will not bind
My soul to grief: Death cannot long divide;
For is it not as if the rose that climbed
My garden wall, had bloomed the other side?

Alice Cary.

A WIFE'S DOMINION.

With wedlock all the romance and fond illusions of courtship vanish, to give place to pleasures of a more enduring character, and duties associated with the most eventful passages in the mutual lives of the married pair. The girl rapidly merges into the woman, clinging with earnest heart to the husband of her choice; and from the moment that she crosses the threshold of his house, she is destined by the kindly law of nature, which knits woman to man, to be to him

"A light
Shining within, when all without is night;
A guardian angel o'er his life presiding,
Doubling his pleasures, and his cares dividing;
Winning him back, when mingling in the throng,
From a vain world we love, alas, too long,
The fireside happiness, and hours of ease,
Blest with that charm, the certainty to please."

Home is the dominion over which the wife is appointed to reign, and her ministers are the angel ones that clothe the flying hours of life with sweet contentment and the quiet joy that steals through the heart and gladdens all within its influence.

She ascends her throne like the moon, to sway by gentleness, and dissipate the sombre hues that overshadowed her husband's bachelorhood; and if she does not quite "o'er the dark her silver mantle" throw, the fault must, in very many instances, rest entirely with herself.

She is invested with the power to queen it with the grace that constitutes the sovereign charm of womanhood, and if she fails to exert her prerogative, it must either be through timidity, misapprehension, or neglect. Taking the mass of failures, and looking at them collectively, we are inclined to think that where no portion of the blame rests with the husband, they may be attributed more to the two former causes than the latter. The diffidence almost natural, and certainly always charming, in the young wife, deters her from venturing upon what she considers as experiments in management; and in her studied anxiety to be correct, she falls back upon her ignorance or preconceived notions of domestic duty, and, in the confusion thus created, becomes disheartened, sometimes frightened, and, after many struggles with the weakness, careless and indifferent. We are strongly of opinion that this would rarely occur if the young married woman commenced her career with a distinct conception of her duties, and a generous and enlarged appreciation of the character and value of a home.

Anger.—Considering anger and irritability of temper in relation to our bodily welfare, how greatly should we conduce to ease, comfort and well-being, were we to correct and suppress all peevishness and turbulence of disposition! "Every human creature," says Dr. Blair, "is sensible to the propensity to some infirmity of temper, which it should be his care to correct and subdue, particularly in the early part of life, else, when arrived at a state of maturity, he may relapse into those faults which were originally in his nature, and which require to be diligently watched and kept under during the whole course of his life."

A Golden Idea.—Several persons have lately been giving mournful pictures of the state of things in California. This does not surprise us, as, from the nature of the soil, we always expected they would be very "dollar-ous."

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

A "non sequiter" is a grammatical Adam, being a relative without an antecedent—something that is *apropos* to nothing, and comes after without following from. A good specimen of it was given by the pious man, who instanced, as a striking proof of the goodness of Providence, that it almost invariably makes a river run right through the middle of every large city And quite akin to this instance of naivete was the reply of the boy, who, being asked whether some shillings which he tendered at a shop were good, answered with great simplicity:—"Ay, that they be, for I seed father make 'em all this morning."

It is truly said of Shakespeare that he exhausted worlds and then imagined new, but this is a power vouchsafed to none but the chosen sons of genius. Common writers can become original, when they have exhausted their natures, only by becoming unnatural. Like a mountebank at a fair, they surprise our attention by their extravagance, but cannot keep it. We shrug our shoulders and forget them. Many are the writers, however, who prefer a present fool's cap to a future laurel.

A writer in one of our standard medical journals inquires why it is that women are more liable to take cold than men. Indeed we don't know, and we wouldn't be ungallant, but Dr. Hall says that the only way to avoid taking cold under certain circumstances is *to keep the mouth shut*.

It is a military maxim that obedience must be implicit and unreasoning. There might have been a serious difficulty, however, in yielding a literal obedience to the adjutant of a volunteer corps, who, being doubtful whether he had distributed muskets to all his men, cried out:—"All you that are without arms please to hold up your hands."

The Right Rev. Dr. England, an English Bishop, was remarkable for always making curates preach for him. One of his parishioners very logically remarked that he had a very valid excuse for doing so, as he had the authority of Lord Nelson for asserting that "England expects every man to do *his* duty."

We have received one of the Eastern pictorials, in which is a very nice engraving, representing a poet on the back of a flying eagle. We are personally acquainted with a great many of the poets, and we must confess that we have never seen one of them upon an eagle, though we have seen many a one "*upon a lark*."

In the two extremes of life we have the most acute sense of novelty. To the boy, all is new: to the old man, when this world no longer offers variety or change, the most stimulating of all novelties is presented—the contemplation of a new existence.

A gentleman was dining at one of our hotels when peas had just come in season, and everybody called peas, peas, peas, till they were all gone. The gentleman was too late, so, rising and taking an attitude, he exclaimed: "Gentlemen may cry peas, peas, but there is no peas."

Opinion is a capricious tyrant, to which many a free-born man yields himself a slave. Men, deeming it more important to be valued than valuable—holding opinion to be worthier than worth—choose to be esteemed by those whom they do not esteem, rather than by themselves.

A man named Durbin was arrested in Tennessee last week for striking another with an axe. When interrocated, he said he did not know the name of the person he had assaulted. It seems he didn't know, and so he *axed* him.

Our own experience should teach us to be exceedingly tolerant. We presume that every man has differed, at various times, from himself, as much as he ever differed at any one time from others.

The editor of the Georgia Enquirer assails our friend of the Philadelphia Inquirer for spelling the name of his paper with an *I*. It seems a pity that some folks cannot be at their *E's* without trying to knock out other people's *I's*.

A steamboat, starting out from our port the other day, advertized that she had "a hundred *berths*" on board. She had one more before she got half way to her point of destination.

Brigham Young says, in one of his latest manifestos, that "the great resources of Utah are her women." It is very evident that the prophet is disposed to *husband his resources*.

It seems to us to be a great moral question whether men who have established a reputation for inveterate lying have a *right*, in any given case, to tell the truth—the only expedient by which they can deceive their hearers.

A man boasted of having killed a young panther, whose tail was four feet long. A bystander remarked that the animal was killed seasonably, as the tail was long enough *not to be continued*.

"You have not opened your mouth during the whole session," said a member of the Legislature. "Oh, yes I have. I yawned through the whole of your speech to-day."

An inquisitive and troublesome fellow, who squinted awfully, asked a member of Congress how he thought things were likely to go. "*As you see*," was the reply.

It has been said, though ill-naturedly, of old men, that they like to give good advice, as a consolation for being no longer in a condition to give a bad example.

One of our divines asks why Cain, who seems to have offered his sacrifice in good faith, didn't obtain divine approbation. Probably because he wasn't *Abel*.

It is a very erroneous imputation upon one of our prominent politicians that "he drinks hard." There's nothing in the world that he does easier.

CURRENT ITEMS.

Mrs. Giulia Forresti, an Italian lady, while walking rapidly along the Second Avenue, a few days since, struck the ball of her foot forcibly against a projecting stone in the pavement, and fell to the sidewalk. On regaining her feet, she found that she could not walk, owing to the intense pain in her injured foot, and which every moment grew more insupportable. A gentleman who was passing called a carriage, and Mrs. F. was taken home. The pain still increased frightfully, and at last lock-jaw set in, and the unfortunate lady was only saved from death by the most skilful and unremitting exertions.

A brutal fellow named Lyelbon, living in Avenue A, a few evenings since attacked his wife, knocked her down and stamped on her, and then kicked one of his children, a little girl of seven years, so violently in the stomach that the blood gushed from her mouth. He was arrested and taken to the station house, but a *certain municipal officer interfered and had him set free!* His aid is valuable at the polls.

Some days ago a man named Tucker was arrested for horse-stealing in Glasgow, Missouri, and sent to jail. Soon after a mob of sixty persons assembled in front of the prison, and announced their determination to lynch the horse-thief. They commenced an assault upon the jail, which so terrified Tucker that he hung himself in his cell, with a towel.

A young girl named Irene Phillips, recently threw herself into the East River, with the intention of drowning herself. On being rescued and interrogated, she said that she could obtain no employment, and as she could not sustain life except at the sacrifice of virtue, she had come to the conclusion to end her miseries and temptations at once.

A man named Wood, who poisoned his brother and sister-in-law some two years since, in the western part of this State, and inherited their property amounting to some forty thousand dollars, has just been detected, and will now probably meet the punishment due to his crime. Murder will out.

A sailor named Savage, while drinking a glass of brandy in a saloon in Front-street, a few nights ago, suddenly clapped his hand upon his stomach, exclaimed "O Lord, I'm a dead man!" fell to the floor, and immediately expired.

A Miss Horton, of South Butler, Wayne county, New York, was recently found suspended, by a couple of skeins of yarn, from the branch of a tree in a piece of woods near her residence. On being taken down she was found to be dead.

A man named Spreadlin, was lately found dead near Fincastle, Virginia, in a hollow tree, supported by a sharpened piece of timber passing through his under jaw close by the windpipe, and the other end resting in the ground.

It is stated that several hundred widows and ophans, whose funds were invested in railroad and mining securities, have been reduced to beggary, by the ruinous decline of such stocks within the last month.

Recent developements made by officers who were engaged in laying the cable for the Atlantic Telegraph, seem to indicate that the project is a hopeless one, and will have to be abandoned.

Four thousand Mormon emigrants are now on their way across the Rocky Mountains to the Great Salt Lake City. At last accounts they were making good progress and in a highly O-be-joyful condition.

A WALK BY THE OCEAN.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

Hail, Ocean wide! with surging tide
That round the light-house breaks,
In conflict with yon frowning Rock,
That fierce rejoinder makes,—
In conflict with the shrinking shore
O'er which, with blending spray,
Thou hurl'st the shell and sea-weed back
In cold, contemptuous play.

What dost thou say?—I own thy sway
As thy deep thunders roll,
And listen to thy solemn lore
With subjugated soul.
But Ocean's tide, with scorn replied,
"Be silent—go thy way;
I hold no fellowship with those
The born of earth and clay.

"With ships they aim my power to tame—
I toss them to and fro—
I break their navies like a reed,
Down to my depths they go.
Hence!—speed thy way!—lest wild with spray
Some billow seek the shore,
And lightly sweep thy wandering feet
Whence they return no more."

Oh, thou most proud!—whose menace loud
Would bid the world take heed,
Who rules thee, with His line of sand,
Like an o'ermastered steed?
Even as a felon from his doom
Shalt thou recoil with dread,
At the strong Angel's mighty voice,
"Thou, Sea! give up thy dead."

Then opening wide thy casket's pride,
Shalt thou its prey restore—
The beauty and the wealth of earth—
From rifled heart and shore;
And yearning o'er the spoils that long
Lock'd in thy bosom lay,
Shall feel beneath a weight of shame
Thy life-tide ebb away.

Watch-Hill, R. I., Aug. 24, 1857.

BION, THE WANDERER;

OR,

THE FAITHLESS GUARDIAN.

A STORY OF HOME, THE OCEAN, AND OTHER CLIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

AUTHOR OF "ORION, THE GOLD-BEATER;" "THE GUNMAKER OF MOSCOW;" "KARMEL, THE SCOUT," ETC., ETC.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XL.

SHOALS AND QUICKSANDS.

Days of joy and sunshine, of peace and of gladness, passed at the widow's cot upon the lake-shore. Mrs. Wallace had learned to love Cora as though she were her own child; and so, too, did she love Bion. Jack played with them, and worked with them; and in the evening, when there was no story to be told, the two children took their turns at reading aloud. Cora, even at the end of a week, could hardly realize that she was to remain with "Grandma." The transition seemed too great and joyous to be an earthly possibility. Many a time, when the joy-flood was welling up in her bosom, did she suddenly stop and wonder if she were not in a sweet dream. She remembered of dreaming such dreams when she had been reading some pleasant book. But she had occasion, after all, to thank God that it was all real.

Time flew on, and the day of departure came. Jack had deposited five thousand and five hundred dollars with a responsible firm in the neighboring village, with the understanding that his mother should draw upon it whenever she had occasion. Bion had brought a thousand dollars with him to deposite in like manner for Cora. Jack fought against it as long as he could, being determined to take care of her himself.

"Look ye, Jack," the boy at length said, "you mean well, but you are, in fact, trying to rob me of the highest joy I have on earth. Do you feel any joy in taking care of your kind old mother? Tell me."

"Do I? You know I do."

"Well—suppose some man should come along and rob you of that privilege? Suppose he should prevent you from helping her any more, and supply all her wants himself, so that when she thanked her protector she would have to thank another?"

"Why—me boy—such a thing couldn't be! I'd put such a man in the lake and drown him!"

"Then let me have the privilege I ask," said the boy, with moistening eyes.

"By the Car of Neptune, me boy, I beg your pardon!" cried the old sailor, seizing Bion by the hand. "I understand it now. I wont say another word. You must forgive me."

Of course this was readily done; and the thousand dollars was deposited for Cora.

"Oh! good, noble Bion," the sweet girl murmured, as she clung to her youthful lover's bosom, "I accept your bounty freely and thankfully, because I know it would make you very unhappy if I did not. And I accept it, too, because it will make me happier to feel that I am not a dependent.—Dependent upon you, I know; but I have a right to be so, for I am yours—yours now and forever!"

"Blessed Cora! O, you know not how happy you make me!"

"And, if we both live, it shall be the one great aim of my life to make you always so!" added the girl, as she pillowed her face upon his bosom and wept for joy.

The hour for departure came, and the wagon was at the door. It had been arranged how the letters should be directed, and how often they should all write. The last adieus were spoken—Jack kissed his mother, then Cora—and then leaped into the wagon. Then Bion bid the widow farewell in the same way, and then turned to his gentle Cora. He pressed her to his bosom. He said "God bless you always!" He kissed her; and in a moment more he was by the side of Jack. When the wagon had gone a short distance he looked back. Cora waved her hand, and smiled a gentle blessing; and in a few seconds more she was hidden from sight.

Could Bion have seen his beloved as the horses reached he main road he would have seen her weeping and sobbing upon the widow's bosom; but he saw it not. He saw only her last sweet smile, and that remained fixed in his mind. He did not know what an effort that smile had cost her, nor how long she had been schooling herself to bestow it upon him. She had thought that he would be happier if he left her smiling, and she had resolved to grant him the boon. She had done it, and it had given to her lover a source of happy reflection that was to last him for many months.

In due time Jack and Bion reached the ship, and they found her already loaded and cleared. The captain took Jack aside on the first opportunity.

"Jack," said he, "I am going to take you into my confidence, and I wish you to promise beforehand to keep secret whatever I may wish kept."

"I'll do that readily, sir," replied the old sailor. "I wouldn't do it for many, sir; but I know you are too honorable a man to impose upon me any conditions which I ought not to keep.—Why do you look at me so sharply, sir?"

"Why—I'll tell you, Jack," returned Puffer, with a smile. "I was struck with the remarkable change in your manner of speaking."

"Why—How?—What d'ye mean, sir?"

"I mean that your language and pronunciation have improved."

"O—oho—yes," uttered Jack, thoughtfully, "I suppose it must be from reading so much."

And so it was—partly that, and partly from association with Bion. At all events, his language had improved, and his words were chosen with better taste than formerly; though he had not realized how much his speech had changed.

However, the captain complimented him, and then proceeded with his business. He told Jack all about Huntley's visit; and also of his own visit to Narrowgimp & Co., together with what he learned there. And then he told of Margery's visit to the ship.

"Then it's just as I expected," said Jack, "not at all surprised, though intensely interested. "That man—Christopher Huntley—is Bion's Uncle, and he has robbed the boy of his wealth."

"But what do you think of Bion's trying to bring him to justice?"

"When do you mean, sir? D'ye mean for him to go at it right away?"

"Yes. I want to know what you think of it."

"What do you think, sir?"

"I want to know what you think, first."

"Well, sir," replied Jack, very seriously, "I'm afraid the old villain 'll prove too many guns for him. Bion's too young to go at him now. If the boy had some other relations living, or, if he had any rich friends, it might do; but the uncle 's got all the power and all the money. Ah, captain, *money* will work wonders in such cases."

THE SUSPICIOUS BASKET OF FIGS AND A STARTLING LETTER.

"Then you think Bion had better not know of this at present?"

"I think so, sir. 'Twould only make him uneasy, and wouldn't help him. One of these days, when he's older, he might know all about it. But for the present I think he'll be far better off as he is."

"You've expressed my opinion exactly, Jack. And we'll act upon it. And now you had better make up your bunk on board the ship. I don't want Bion to go to the hotel at all; and if he has occasion to go up town we will see that he has protection without his knowing it. If he asks you why you don't go to the hotel, you can tell him you have been appointed to the office of second mate of the ship, and that you cannot leave."

"But when he sees that I aint second mate,—what shall I tell him then?"

"But you *are* second mate. I have secured the office to you."

"Eh?—What?—Second officer of this ship?" cried Jack, in blank surprise. "You don't mean so."

"But I do mean so. Do you not feel competent to do the duty?"

Jack's eyes filled with tears, and for some moments the words stuck in his throat. But finally he said:—

"Yes, sir,—thanks to noble, generous Bion, and thanks to God for giving him to me,—I do!"

"Ah—what of him?"

"Why, sir—he taught me to read and write, sir. It has been my ignorance of that that has kept me back so long. I know a ship as the schoolmaster knows the primer; and now I know all the rest."

Captain Puffer saw how the old sailor was affected, and with a generous delicacy he turned the subject.

"You will make your preparations for the voyage as I have informed you," he said. "Bion will come into the cabin, but not as a waiter. He will still hold his rank among the foremast hands, but I claim the privilege of having one so young under my own care."

Jack was too full of gratitude to express it all then; but he was quickly relieved by the captain's coming back upon business.

It was finally arranged that Bion should know nothing of what had been learned concerning him; but that Captain Puffer should, when he had time, write it all down, carefully and fully, so that, in case of accident, the boy should have it. After this, Jack went to seek his protege.

Bion was so pleased when he learned that Jack had been promoted to the important office of second mate, that he rather liked the idea of remaining on board. He spoke once of Christopher Huntley; but Jack very soon persuaded him to think no more of that man for the present. Said the old sailor—

"Let him go now, Bion. We shan't have time to do anything; and if he is a villain, and suspects that you know anything about him, he may get ye into trouble afore ye're aware of it."

Just then the captain came up, and delivered to the boy all of Margery's message, save that portion alluding to Huntley. Bion was much pleased with what the woman had said about Cora, and it relieved his mind of quite a burden. As soon as he had opportunity he went down into the cabin and wrote a letter to the beloved girl, informing her of Jack's promotion; of their success on their trip to the city; and then he told of the message which Margery had left for him;—how she was glad Cora was gone, and how she should always love her. And he promised to write again before he sailed.

Bion knew that Cora would feel much easier to know how Margery took her flight, and hence he had been anxious to write. The letter was directed to her, and then put into a cover superscribed to Mrs. Wallace, and the captain sent it to the office with some letters of his own.

On the following day, Captain Puffer noticed two villainous looking men who were hanging about the pier, and after watching them awhile he was satisfied that they had their eyes upon the ship. He called one of them to him, and after examining him from head to foot, he said—

"Look ye, my fine fellow, I want you to understand that there are sharp eyes after you; and if you wake up in the jug some bright morning you wont be surprised. That's all I've got to say. Good day, sir!"

Half an hour afterwards the two men disappeared; and in two hours more Christopher Huntley made his appearance on board the ship. Bion was sent below when the captain saw him coming.

"Ah—beautiful day," said the merchant, in a nervous, uneasy tone.

Captain Puffer could not wholly subdue the look of utter contempt that he knew dwelt upon his face. Had he before entertained the least doubt concerning the probability that the two villains whom he had frightened away from the pier had communicated that fact to Huntley, and that in consequence thereof Huntley himself had come, the doubts would have been all removed by the merchant's appearance and tone as he now spoke.

Several forced remarks were made by the visitor, and he then proposed that they should go into the cabin a moment.

"You must excuse me," returned Puffer; "but I have so much to look after here that I dare not leave. But any business can be done here, sir."

"Ah—never mind. But about that boy. Let's see—what's this his name was?"

"I have had several boys, sir. Which one do you mean?"

"Why—the one we were speaking of the other day."

"Which one was that?"

"O—Bion, his name was, I think. *Bion*. That's it."

"Well—what of him, sir?" asked the captain, looking Huntley calmly in the eye.

"Why—you remember what we were speaking of, sir," returned the merchant, uneasily.

"Let's see. We did speak of him; I remember now."

"Why—yes—you know I told you about his dishonesty. Of course you will not have him go in the ship."

"What would you advise me to do with him, sir?"

"Well—set him ashore. You can do no more."

"I'll think of it, sir; and if I *do* set him ashore I'll send you word."

"I wish you would, sir; for I might provide a place for him where he would be well off."

"I'll be sure to send you word, sir, when I put him ashore. By the way—shall I send his chest to your store?"

"O!—no, no! He has money enough to pay for having his chest taken to a boarding-house, hasn't he?"

"I guess he has."

"Then let him do so. Just you set him on shore, and if he is wanting for money I will supply him willingly until I can get him a good home where he can be strictly kept and governed."

"Very well, sir," said the captain, "I'll attend to his case."

With this the merchant left the ship, and the captain gazed after him with mingled feelings of rage and contempt. Several times he had been upon the point of giving his indignation full play, but he succeeded in keeping it to himself, and he was now glad that he had done so.

Friday morning at length came, and the whole crew were on board at breakfast, sober and steady. About eight o'clock, Mr. Huntley came down and called the captain upon the pier. He spoke of the weather—the fair wind—and some other things; and then asked where "*that boy*" was.

"He's in the cabin now, sir," replied Puffer.

"And do you mean to take him to sea with you?"

"I do, sir."

"But, sir—I—I——"

"Stop, stop, Mr. Huntley. I know the boy very well; and a better, a nobler, or a more honorable boy God never preserved through trial and danger. You have not money enough to buy his services from me!"

Christopher Huntley was thunderstruck. He turned first red, and then pale, and then he stammered something about being mistaken. He "hoped the boy was not the one he had thought," and several other things equally forced; and as quickly as possible he made an excuse to get away, remembering to hope that they would have a very pleasant voyage, for all of which the captain was duly thankful.

Before noon the Good News was under sail, and before dark she had left Sandy Hook far astern. Jack felt a little awkward at first with the importance of so responsible an office upon him; but he knew his duty, and no man could have done it better. He had charge of the starboard watch with the captain, and consequently had charge of the ship a great part of the time, as the captain seldom, if ever, stood his watch.

Bion felt free and at home once more, and soon became the acknowledged favorite of both officers and men. Life was still before him, and he turned his thoughts to the future with pure and stern resolves.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE STORM, AND THE ISLAND.

We must now pass over a term of years very briefly. The cruise of the Good News was performed without accident or startling adventure of any kind. Of course there was much of interest transpired in the mimic world on shipboard, but as it has nothing to do with the development of our story, we pass it by. At the age of fifteen Bion again accompanied Jack to the sweet cottage on the lake shore. He found Cora grown more beautiful than ever, and she declared that he had improved in every way. The widow was well and hearty, and lived now in the bright sunlight of Cora's smile and song.

Two weeks were passed there—two happy, joyous weeks—and then the sea-farers departed for their ship again.

The first mate of the Good News had been promoted to the command of a new ship, and Jack Wallace was raised to his place.

Christopher Huntley was not in the city. He had gone to Cuba for the health of his wife, and his business was in the hands of a competent agent.

At length the ship cleared again, and Bion was once more upon the water.

Time passed on, and our hero grew older and stronger. Cora's letters afforded him seasons of sweet entertainment, and when he wrote to her he poured out his whole heart upon the paper.

Another, and another voyage followed, and Bion Bernard was twenty years old. He had grown to a powerful, athletic young man, and was acknowledged one of the best seamen on shipboard.

The Good News, still staunch and strong, lay at her pier in New York, and Alexander Puffer was to command her no more. He now owned the whole of her, and had made arrangements to settle down at home. His first movement was to ask Jack Wallace to take command, but Jack said no.

"Why not?" asked the old captain.

"Because I'm too old; and because I haven't got the assurance. If Bion Bernard will take the command, I'll go as his first officer."

When Captain Puffer was fully assured that Jack really desired this, he was much pleased, for he was well aware that Bion would make by far the best commander. The youth was not, perhaps, a better sailor; but he was more polished and educated; would command the most of that respect which is so necessary on shipboard, and he had also more of the elements of the leader in his composition.

So it was speedily arranged that Bion should take command, and that Jack should retain his old office of first mate.

Cora wept with a joyous pride when she first knew that her lover had been appointed to the command of a great ship. She clung to his bosom, and thanked God for the blessing thus bestowed upon her. And even Jack, now grown somewhat corpulent in his advanced age, shed many tears as he gazed upon the noble youth before him, and remembered how he had led him up from a helpless boy.

"One trip more, dearest," whispered the youthful captain, as he held Cora to his bosom,—"one trip more—and we will take upon ourselves the outward form of the union which has so long bound our souls together. One trip more, and our life-cup shall be filled!"

It was a joyous thought, and the maiden's eyes beamed brightly beneath the tears that had gathered upon them.

She was a beautiful girl—lovely as she was good—and good as earth can give to Heaven. Men gazed upon her as they passed, and maidens who knew not her virtues envied her for her beauty. In the village church all loved her, and were glad that she was beautiful, because her gentle manners, her deep affection, and her modest piety had won them all.

One thing alone remained to mar the contentment of the two lovers: They could not forget the past. They could not forget that they once had parents; and the belief still clung to them that they had been deeply wronged. Cora remembered the story of her poor tutor; and Bion remembered much—very much, that pointed to his own wrongs. He still regarded Christopher Huntley as his enemy, and he meant at some time to sift the matter to the bottom; but friends had advised him to wait until he was one-and-twenty, and he had concluded to follow that advice.

The day of sailing at length arrived, and Bion Bernard took his place upon the quarter-deck. The ship had been thoroughly overhauled, and was pronounced by competent judges as good as new. Captain Puffer was upon the deck, and he went down as far as Sandy Hook, and returned with the pilot.

Ere many days the crew had become accustomed to their new commander, and they resolved, to a man, that he should never have occasion to reprimand one of them for a fault. And their chief mate, too, they loved equally well. In fact, it was a model crew throughout, though not one whit better in stock than many a crew which has been made ugly and mutinous by brutal officers.

The ship was bound first to Canton, and nothing occurred to mar the pleasure and harmony of all on board until they were within about a week's sail of their destination. They had entered the Chinese Sea, and were standing due north.

One afternoon Bion came on deck and looked carefully about.

"What is it, Capt'n?" asked Jack, who had learned to say "*Capt'n*" as naturally to his protege as he ever did to any man.

"Don't it look a little bit freakish off here to the south'rd and west'rd?" Bion returned.

Jack cast his eyes in the direction pointed out, and gazed for some moments.

"Well," he said, "it does look curious off there, but d'ye think 'twill amount to much?"

"I'm afraid so. The barometer has settled quarter of an inch since dinner."

"It has?"

"Yes. And I'm afraid we'll have a blow. You and I have had enough of them in these seas to begin to look out for them."

"That's so."

In an hour from that time the sun sank below the horizon, clear and bright, and ere long the shades of night began to settle down over the water.

"Call all hands to shorten sail," ordered Bion. "Send down the topgallant and royal yards, and make ready to let the masts follow. We'll house the topmasts after that, sir!"

The men were surprised at these orders; but they had learned to look upon all that their captain said as pure gospel. and they went at the work with a will.

"I'm afeared we'll only have 'em to send up agin in the mornin'," said an old foretop-man, who could see no signs of a storm.

"But, for all that, it will come very handy to have them to send up, won't it?" returned the captain, who had overheard the remark.

"In course 'twill, sir," the old sailor responded, rather hesitatingly.

"Well—we might lose them if we left them up there over night."

Ere long the topgallant masts were on deck, and the topmasts housed, the topsails being left so that the yard could be hoisted just clear of the cap at a close-reef. The masts were so fixed that they did not bring the crosstrees chock down when thus housed.

At nine o'clock the wind began to veer, and after sweeping all around the compass, it lulled for a short time, and then came out from the south'rd and west'rd. At first it came in cool puffs, varying from south to south-west; but finally it settled down from about south-south-west, and began to blow hard.

At midnight all hands were called. The old foretop-man came on deck, and as he found the sea lashed in fury by the gale, he said,—

"Well—shiver my toplights ef I ever doubt what Capt'n Bernard says agin. Ef he says the north-star's workin' 'round to the south'rd I should believe him—blow me ef I wouldn't."

"Right, Ben—right, old boy," rejoined an old forecastle man. "I've been wi' that chap ever since he was knee-high to a chaw o' terbacker, and no man ever heerd him say a thing that he didn't know. When *he* says a thing, I tell ye, ye may depend upon it."

The conversation might have extended further, but the voice of the captain was heard calling the men aft; and in a few moments they were all collected upon the quarter-deck.

"My men," spoke Bion, in a clear, ringing tone, which sounded above the voice of the tempest, "we have seen but the beginning of this storm. It will grow worse—far worse—before it grows less. I apprehend no danger if every man does his duty. Stand by me, and I will do my best. I tell you now that we have a hard time before us. I must ask you to remain here with me till morning. Those who have had the first watch will sleep then. Will you do it?"

There was but one answer—a simultaneous "*Yes*;" and then the captain went at work to station the men.

The ship was now lying to under her three close-reefed topsails, a balance-reefed storm-mizzen, and fore-storm-staysail. But as the fury of the storm increased it became evident that the lower sails would be no longer of use; the sea ran so high that the wind was taken wholly from them, and the order was given for taking them in.

From that time until three o'clock the ship lay with her head to the south'rd and east'rd, under the three topsails; but at that time the gale had increased to such fury that she would not bear so much canvass with safety. It was a question whether she would lie-to under the main-topsail; but the thing was tried, and it worked for awhile.

As the first dull haze of morning appeared the storm had reached a fearful pitch. The gale howled like a mad demon, shrieking and roaring through the rigging; the rain came driving down in torrents; and the seas had grown to mountains, which rolled o'er the surface of the ocean like racing monsters.

"We can stand this no longer," said Bion, being obliged to cry into Jack's ear to make him hear.

"That's a fact. The sea is rising, and we'll be swamped."

"Aye—and the gale has not reached its height yet, either."

The ship was now being pitched and driven about in wild fury—the huge seas breaking over her, sweeping her deck fore and aft—and anon knocking her off into the deep trough. Bion saw that the men were beginning to show signs of fear. They were obliged to cling to the rails for support, no one daring to trust himself for a moment without a hold for his hands.

The youthful captain cast his eyes once more about the horizon, as the ship arose upon the bosom of a mighty sea, and then he made his way below. He spread out his chart of the Chinese Sea, and having calculated his own position, and noted the various bearings of different points of land, he returned to the deck.

"Stand by the braces!" he shouted, at the top of his voice. "We must put her before it!"

In an instant every heart grew lighter, and the men sprang with a will to the work. The helm was put carefully up, and ere long the noble ship was safely before the gale, flying away over the sea under the close-reefed main-topsail. The change in the motion of the vessel was as great as it was sudden. Only those who have lain up to a fierce gale, with the sea breaking over the bows at every plunge, and the ship heaving and pitching as though she would go in pieces at every throe, can realize the change which comes o'er the struggling craft as she turns her head from it and starts to run away. The seas no longer wash her decks; she no longer heaves and plunges, startling her crew from their feet at every movement; but with wind astern she leaps from sea to sea, maintaining an almost equal poise; and if they can keep out of the way of the following mountains of water, and know that they have plenty of open sea ahead, they have little to fear.

As soon as the Good News had been thus directed, and all was belayed, the captain told the starboard watch they might go below and turn in. They had been on duty all night, and were much worn and fatigued.

Up to twelve o'clock, at noon, the gale continued to increase, and the fear began to be entertained that the topsail would not hold. The strain upon it was intense. The canvass seemed to swell and stretch before the fury of the gale, and the sheets groaned with the load they had to sustain.

At one o'clock the captain went aloft and examined the sail, and when he came down he ordered the spare main-topsail to be got out and overhauled.

"Wont the tops'l stand it?" asked the second mate.

"No—it cannot," replied Bion. "Even now it has started from the bolt-rope in several places. There is no——"

His words were cut short by a report like a cannon. The topsail had burst, and was now streaming in ribbons from the yard and rope.

"Aloft and loose the fore-topsail!" shouted the captain. "Work for your lives, men! If these seas overtake and poop us we may be swamped!"

The men saw the danger, and they made their way aloft as quickly as possible. But it was no light task to gain the top-sail-yard in that gale, nor was it an easy matter to work after having gained the yard. The gale was so powerful that from an ordinary hold a man would have been blown at once. Every step had to be carefully taken; the feet planted firmly; and the hands placed surely upon a safe hold. The bodies of the men were swayed to and fro like things of cork; and when they reached the yard it seemed as though the wind must either find its way through them or blow them off.

But the sail was cast loose—the starboard clew first—and when that was sheeted home the other clew followed safely. The yard was hoisted clear of the cap, and then attention was turned to getting up and bending the new main-topsail. After a deal of trouble and hard work the sail was bent and furled with a close-reef. The ship sailed and steered well under the fore-topsail, and the captain concluded to let it remain as long as it would hold.

At two o'clock it was evident that the gale had reached its utmost height; but still there were no signs of clearing up. All day the noble ship flew on before the wind, and when night came it was still blowing furiously. To think of lying-to would be madness; and to think of scudding under bare poles would be equally mad, for with the topsail set the gigantic seas followed them closely up.

At six o'clock Bion examined the chart, and reckoned up his log; and having found that he had plenty of sea room for the present, he gave his trumpet to Jack, and said he would go down and get a nap. He had not closed his eyes since the morning before the storm —over forty hours—and he felt now like resting. Yet he made his mate promise to call him if there was any change in the weather or in the sailing of the ship.

"How long may we stand on this course without danger?" Jack asked.

"Three hundred miles may be run in clear sea," answered Bion, as he turned to go below.

The captain was allowed to sleep until three o'clock in the morning, and then he awoke of his own accord. When he came on deck he found the wind still blowing furiously; but the moment the gale struck his cheek he knew that a change was near at hand. He could feel it more easily than could one who had been upon the deck through the night.

"Keep up good spirits, my men," he cried, after he had turned his face to the gale awhile. "We'll have a change for the better when the sun comes up again."

The men heard his words, and their fears were quieted. They knew he would never tell them an untruth for the purpose of pleasing them; and their confidence in his knowledge was unbounded.

After this Bion went below and opened the chart again, and having reckoned up his log, he worked out his position. Then he went on deck and found Jack.

"If we alter our course slightly to the eastward we shall see land by nine o'clock," he said.

"Land?" cried Wallace. "What land?"

"The Pratas Islands. They are not over forty miles distant."

"But are you as sure as that of the distance we have made?" queried Jack, rather dubiously.

"If you have kept your log regularly since dark, I am."

"Well you may depend upon that, sir."

"Then you may depend upon seeing land by nine o'clock this morning.

In half an hour from that time the gale began to subside perceptibly, and by the time the sun was up it had subsided to only a smart breeze. At eight o'clock the clouds rolled away to the eastward, and the sun burst forth, sending its resplendant beams over the troubled sea, and shedding gladness over the hearts of the worn and weary crew.

At half-past eight the look out at the mast-head reported land upon the starboard bow!

It was a strange destiny which had led them to that mid-ocean island!

CHAPTER XLII.

A SUSPICIOUS FRUIT-BASKET.

The island which had thus been seen was in latitude 20, 30 North, and longitude 115, 40 East, and some two hundred and twenty miles southeast of Hong Kong. At ten o'clock the lookout reported that he could see a fine harbor, with a village of huts near the shore. Bion took his glass and went aloft. He examined the place carefully, and was satisfied that he could run in easily. The wind had now settled to a pleasant breeze which came out from the westward, and though the sea ran high, yet there was no danger to be apprehended. Men were stationed in the chains with the leads, and directed to throw as often as they conveniently could.

The entrance to the harbor was narrow, and flanked on either hand by bold banks, which were bare of trees, but yet green with verdure. The bay was about a mile wide in its greatest diameter, and nearly the same in depth, from its entrance. The huts which the lookout had seen were some forty in number, and behind them was spread out quite a large tract of improved land.

There was some hesitation on Bion's part about venturing in; and he told the crew that if they had any objections he would not do it. Said he:—

"Our old ship has been pretty well tried, and I should like to come to anchor to overhaul the rigging a little. We have plenty of arms, and if you have no fears, we'll run in."

The men were rather anxious to run in than otherwise, and at once promised to stand by the ship in case of danger.

Accordingly the helm was put up, the yards squared, and ere long they dropped anchor near the center of the harbor. Very soon three canoes started from the shore and were paddled towards the vessel. They contained four men each, and as they came near they were found to be armed with spears and knifes. They came alongside, and were allowed to come on board, the hatches having been secured first, as most of the natives of these islands were known to be unmitigated thieves.

These fellows were darker than the Chinese, though they were the same in feature. They were tall and slim, wearing a piece of cotton cloth thrown over the left shoulder, and then brought down under the right arm and wound around the body. They had no other covering of any kind. They were an artful looking squad, but not ugly. One of them spoke a little English. He was the oldest of the company, and appeared to be a leader among them. While he was conversing with the captain the others were peering about as though they had never seen a ship before; and one of them was not long in transferring two brass belaying-pins from the fife-rail to his bosom. Jack Wallace had noticed the movement, and with a broad smile he took the dark visitor by the shoulder and adroitly relieved him of his load. The others saw that they were narrowly watched, and consequently left things alone.

Meanwhile Bion was conversing with the chief, from whom he learned that the village was called Tabas; that there were a hundred and fifty inhabitants; and that they lived by agriculture and fishing. The captain asked him how he learned to speak English. He hesitated at first, but finally said that he had been in a country where Englishmen lived. Bion doubted this. He had asked the question with no particular idea, but the fellow's answer puzzled him. However, if the natives had been up to any mischief it was not in his way to pry into it, for under present circumstances he could not afford to excite the people's animosity.

The captain expressed a wish to go on shore and look around, and also offered to purchase such fruit and vegetables as they had to sell, in return for which he would pay them cloth or ornaments. All this the old fellow seemed much pleased to grant; and though Bion could detect an undercurrent of cunning and treachery, yet he entertained no fears.

Before the natives left, the captain had a dozen new bright tin cups brought up, and when the visitors received them as their own they were wild with delight. They knocked them together; danced and sang; and when they had got into their canoes they commenced to dip up the sea-water and throw it into the air, shouting and laughing like crazy creatures.

Some fifteen minutes after the canoes had reached the shore a party of men were seen to leave the village and wind off around a small hill to the northward. They seemed to be in haste, and ever and anon they would turn as though to gaze upon the ship.

"I wonder what they're up to?" said Jack, who had been watching them.

"I can't imagine, unless they have gone to inform some inland dwellers of our presence," returned Bion.

"D'ye 'spose they mean mischief?"

"I guess not. They may have only gone to see about the fruit we are to have. There don't seem to be much fruit in sight."

In less than half-an-hour the men were seen to return; but in a few moments after they hove in sight the captain discovered that there were only eight of them, two of the party having been left behind.

"What does that mean?" queried Jack.

"I don't know," said the captain.

"But what d'ye think?"

"What do you think, Jack?"

"Why—I'll tell ye what has struck me: Them fellows wanted to convey some sort of intelligence to the people somewhere else, and in order not to have us mistrust 'em, they took ten men out and brought eight back, thinking that we should'nt notice the deficiency. The other two may have gone on their errand."

"I don't hardly think there is any cause for such suspicion," returned Bion; "but still I shall act upon it. We will go on shore at once, before others can have time to come in, and then we can judge something from what we see."

This plan was at once acted upon. The stern-boat was lowered, and ten of the stoutest men, armed each with a cutlass and a brace of heavy pistols, got in, followed by the captain and Jack Wallace. The rest of the crew were directed to get out the pinnace, and be ready to put for the shore at once, should they see any sign of trouble.

When they reached the little shore they found a large party of the natives, of all ages and sizes, and of both sexes, ready to receive them. The old chief professed to be very happy to receive them, and conducted them at once to his hut, which was the largest in the village, and near the centre of the settlement. It was built of bamboo—the apartments being separated by partitions of the same material made close by interwoven straw.

The host brought forward some food and drink, which our men tasted of from mere politeness, being neither hungry nor thirsty; and also unable to have drunk or eaten the stuff placed before them, unless they had happened to have been in a starving condition.

After awhile Bion signified a desire to look around a little, and the chief seemed perfectly willing to grant him the privilege; though the captain could see very plainly that his host had his thoughts fixed upon "favors to be returned." The Americans saw little to entertain them, the village being but a more extended picture of the chief's dwelling. It was a scene of dirt and sloth, and ugly faces. Only one thing particularly arrested their attention, and that was, the number of household articles which bore the American stamp. There were chairs, stools, tables, and so on, which were certainly manufactured by some one who was intimately acquainted with American patterns.

"Where did you get all these things?" asked Bion, pointing to some chairs which stood at the door of a hut.

"O—made um," was the response.

"Who made them?"

"Man—mine man—Pratas man—make 'um."

"But where did he learn?"

"O—me learn—way off where Engleeshman be."

Bion knew better than this; but as he had no hope of arriving at the truth he let it pass.

By-and-bye they came to a long, low hut which was closed. Bion asked what it was for. The chief hesitated, and finally said he didn't know. It belonged to one of his men who had gone away.

Ten or fifteen minutes afterwards Jack Wallace, who had slipped around behind the building in question, unobserved, came to Bion's side and whispered in his ear:—

"There's a full set of Yankee carpenters' tools in that house!"

"Are you sure?"

"Of course I am. I found a large hole to look through, and saw them plainly."

Bion was thoughtful for a few moments, but finally resolved to take no further notice of the affair at present. He would look around and examine things more, and perhaps he might learn something by accident.

An hour was spent in looking over the place, and then the men turned towards their boat. Bion had not been able to detect anything of a suspicious character, save at times when the old chief appeared to be uneasy and nervous; but that seemed to be more the effect of fear than anything else. However, the young captain resolved to keep his eyes open, and be prepared as completely as possible for any emergency.

Just as they reached the boat an old woman came out from among the crowd which had followed them to the shore, and presented the captain with a basket of figs. The fruit was fresh and ripe, and of remarkable size. He asked her how much he should give her, and she held up two of her fingers. He put his hand into his pocket and drew out a couple of sixpences, with which she seemed much pleased; and as soon as she had got the money she hastened away with a frightened look, and was soon hidden from sight.

"There's something wrong about that," said Jack, who had noticed the movement.

"There is, certainly," returned Bion. "In fact, there's something wrong all around us."

They pushed off, and when they reached the ship the captain set the men at work, and then retired to his cabin with Jack, taking the basket of figs with him.

"Don't you eat any of those things," said the mate, as they sat down.

"I thought of that myself, Jack," returned Bion, in a thoughtful mood. "Those fellows are a set of unmitigated scamps, at best; but whether they have the bottom to be perfect villains I don't know. When the old chief was talking about the vegetables I thought he acted queerly. I shouldn't wonder at all if they meant to poison the whole of us, and then rob the ship. Or, if they can't poison us all, poison enough so that the rest can be easily overcome. I believe I'll look sharp after their provisions."

"Aye—we must," said Jack, as he took up a fig from the basket. "But, I declare, this looks good. They are nice ones. I wonder if they are the same all through? Yes. All large and fine. My eyes, but they look good. Fairly make my mouth water. Why—these down at the bottom are the largest. Ha! Hallo! What's this?"

As he thus spoke he drew forth a folded paper. He opened it, and it appeared to be a blank leaf from a book. There was writing upon it, done with some sort of red fluid. Jack read,—

"To the Captain of the American Ship:"

"What?" exclaimed Bion, reaching forth and taking the paper. "Directed to me?"

The paper was seemingly from an octavo volume, much worn and thumbed; but the writing, which was in a cramped hand, was fresh. The captain looked it over a few moments, and then read aloud as follows:—

> "To the Captain of the American Ship:—I saw you come in this morning, and knowing that we should be taken away and concealed, I shall write this, and make an attempt to get it to you. If you receive it, it will be from an old woman, and in a basket of figs. She is my friend, but she thinks I only mean to warn you of danger. She dreams not that I think of leaving. So you will be careful, and do nothing which can expose her.
>
> "I was captain of an American ship which was captured by pirates, in the Chinese Sea, many years ago. Our ship was robbed and then wrecked—the spars all cut away, and the sails and rigging carried off. Four of our crew were killed, and the rest were brought to this island and sold into slavery, where we were at once set at work. Our carpenters' tools were sold with us, and you will see much of our handicraft if you go on shore. That was many years ago. All have died save two of us; and we cannot live much longer here. I will not tell you of our sufferings, for you can imagine them. Whenever a ship appears in these waters we are taken off and concealed; though yours is the second American vessel which has been here since our enslavement.
>
> "If you take your boat and pull out of the harbor, and then turn to the northward, and follow the shore up for about a mile, you will come to a small creek making up into the land. Turn into this, and at the distance of a mile further you will come to a sort of basin, upon the right bank of which you will see three very tall trees standing alone. Land there, and then strike your course as near at a right angle with the stream as you can. This will lead you through a thicket of small mulberries, and, at a distance of some forty rods, bring you to an open field. At this point you will see, upon your left hand, a small conical hill. Upon the north side of that hill there is a deep cave, the mouth of which is secured by a great rock; and there we shall be probably confined. They generally take out eight or ten men, as it requires that number to turn the rock up against the entrance. So you will need the same number of your men. You will probably find handspikes at the cave.
>
> "In the name of Heaven—in the name of our noble country—I pray you come and save us!" The moon will be up to-night. If you come at midnight you will be pretty sure not to be disturbed. Will you not come and set us free!
>
> "Your countryman, Louis Fourber."

Bion had been some time in deciphering the missive, for it was written upon both sides, and the ink had spread badly. For some moments after he had finished reading he gazed into Jack's face without speaking.

"This accounts for all the strange things we have seen," he at length remarked.

"Yes," returned the mate. "We can see through it now. That accounts for their being so shy. But I have heard that name before. *Louis Fourber—Fourber—Captain Fourber.*—I have, as sure as fate."

"And the name has a familiar sound to me, too," responded Bion. "But then I may have heard the name often. However, they shall be saved if we have the power to do it."

"Of course they shall," cried Jack, bringing his hand down upon his knee emphatically. "By the powers, I'd be one of twenty to take them from the middle of the village!"

"I guess there'd be no trouble in finding the number to follow you," added Bion, proudly.

After this the captain and his mate arranged their plans for the adventure, and while they did so they regaled themselves with figs, for they had no more reason for fearing them.

During the afternoon the top-gallant masts were sent aloft and fidded; the yards crossed and the sails bent; and before dark all was ready for sea.

Few ships could have passed through that storm and come out so safely; at least so the old seamen said; and they gave the credit where it was due.

In the meantime Bion watched the passing of time anxiously, for he had a curious task before him.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

The woman that has not touched the heart of a man before he leads her to the altar, has scarcely a chance to charm it when possession and security turn their powerful arms against her.

THE FORCE OF HABIT.

Habit is the basis of conduct, and, as an acquisition, largely influences, indeed makes up, the individuality we all possess. It may be divided into the physical, the moral, and the mental, and each condition requires the most incessant vigilance to prevent its being contaminated by too familiar an intercourse with irregular indulgences. As regards the body, this is especially the case; for when pampered, abused, or neglected, it inflicts severe chastisement upon every one of the qualities that make up the constitution of what, for the sake of explicity, we recognize as mind and morals. Take, for example, the dissipated man. He, at the outset, probably only gratified the desires of a rather warm temperament, but in the heat and fury of his appetite he did not pause to discriminate between the beneficial and injurious, or the lawful and unlawful. He had a want, and not having the prudence to study its character, surrendered himself to the temptation of the moment. If the gratification were one of so purely physical a nature that it led to the formation of a wish to have it renewed, excess was thus suggested to the mind, and what previously was but a luxury, or a stolen pleasure, became a necessity. The body is familiarized with a new mode of existence, and unless checked by the strength and purity of the mind, insists upon its being renewed and continued.

This is proved by the coarse craving which torments both the drunkard and the glutton. Each have had their palates tickled, and every day that passes over their heads finds them still more desirous of enjoying what they have accustomed their bodies to consider as part and parcel of the aliment necessary to support them. It is the same with the sensualist, or any other disgraceful squanderer of the means of human enjoyment. They habituate themselves to the commission of fearful moral offences, and in the course of time are acclimated in the atmosphere they have created around them. Their desires reach "mad bounds;" and however frequently the voice of conscience may whisper, they persist in the practices to which, in defiance of the laws that regulate our common nature, they have devoted themselves. Habits of body are thus contracted, and their pernicious consequences affect the whole moral and mental system. The taste for the pure and intellectual becomes vitiated, the heart beats more coldly to the impulses to do good, and the mind looks leniently upon what, in an incorrupted state, it would condemn and abhor.

* * *

THE LILY AND THE ROSE.

Tell me, ye lovely daughters of the rough dark earth, who gave you your beautiful shapes? Surely, by dainty fingers have you been formed! What race of tiny spirits rose from your petals, and what was your delight when they rocked themselves on your leaves? Tell me, ye peaceful flowers, how they arranged themselves for their joyful task, and how they nodded and beckoned to each other, when in such various forms they spun their finest threads, so manifold, and so adorned? You are still, sweet children of bliss, and enjoy, in silence, your existence. The instructive fable shall relate what your lips withhold:—In days long past, when the earth was yet a naked rock, a friendly group of nymphs bore upon it the virgin soil, and favoring master-spirits stood ready to plant with flowers the hitherto barren ground. Variously they separated for their employment. Already, under the snow, upon the small, cold grass, modest Humility ventured forth and wove the self-concealing violet. Hope stepped on behind her, and filled with cooling balm the little cups of the refreshing hyacinth. Now advanced a proud and shining troop of many-colored beauties; the Tulip raised high her head: the Narcissus, with languishing eyes, glanced smiling around. Other kindred spirits busied themselves in various ways, and adorned the earth, rejoicing over her forms of beauty. As, however, this glory, along with their joy over a great part of their work, faded and departed, Venus spoke thus to her Graces:—"Why tarry you, sisters of loveliness? Rise, and weave also from your charms a mortal and visible flower." They sank to the earth beneath, and Aglaja, with innocence, formed the Lily; Thalia and Euphrosyne, with sisterly hand, wove the flower of joy and love —the virgin Rose. Many flowers of the field and garden envied each other; the Lily and the Rose envied none, but were themselves envied by all. The sister Graces had formed them inseparable, and, sister-like, they bloomed together, nourished by the seasons, and shedding beauty on each other. Upon thy cheek, also, O maiden! blooms the lily and the rose; may also their graces—Innocence, Joy, and Love, ever dwell there, united and inseparable.

* * *

LESSONS FOR OLD AND YOUNG.

These lessons, in words of one and two syllables, are intended to be read by children to adults, on a system of mutual instruction, by which both parties may teach and learn at the same time.

The Tip-sy Man.—Look at that man. He can-not walk straight. See how he rolls and tum-bles a-bout. He can-not speak plain. Why can he not speak plain, and why does he tum-ble and roll a-bout? He has been drink-ing. I think he has had too much bran-dy and wa-ter. He is a tip-sy man. His head will ache to-morrow. How silly of him to drink too much bran-dy and wa-ter and make his head ache! Pa-pa ne-ver drinks too much bran-dy and wa-ter. What a good pa-pa!

The Dry-good's Store.—That is a dry-good's store. There is a la-dy. She is buy-ing a dress. Where is her hus-band? He is at work. He does not know that she is buy-ing a dress. She has more dress-es than she wants. Her hus-band will have to pay for her new dress. He can-not af-ford the mo-ney. It is ve-ry wrong of her to buy a dress that she does not want when he can-not af-ford to pay for it. Mam-ma ne-ver serves pa-pa so; does she, dear mamma?

The Ci-gar.—Oh! what a nas-ty smell! Where does it come from? It comes from that man's ci-gar. He is smo-king. Dir-ty man! See what a smoke he makes! His mouth is like a chim-ney. His hair and clothes will smell of smoke all day. Who would like to make his mouth a chim-ney, and to smell of fil-thy smoke? Not un-cle I am sure he would not be such a dir-ty un-cle as that.

Dar-by and Joan.—Hark, what a noise in the next house! What are they do-ing there? They are hav-ing a quar-rel. Who are the people in the next house? They are Dar-by and Joan. How loud they talk! I hear them cal-ling each other names. Dar-by is scold-ing Joan. Now Joan is cry-ing. They are not a hap-py couple. Darby and Joan live like cat and dog. I ne-ver heard pa-pa and mam-ma quar-rel like Dar-by and Joan.

* * *

A Californian Amazon.—She rides wild horses, throws the lasso adroitly, and never misses her aim with the rifle. She carries a hunting-knife in her girdle, and understands the anatomy of either stag or buffalo; knows nothing about corsets, furbelows, capes, crinoline or flounces; never wears bonnets, and speaks no scandal.

A WIDOW OF THE OLDEN TIME.

A curious instance of a lady availing herself, in 1540, of the right to appear by champion, in a breach of promise of marriage case, is mentioned in the memoirs of Marechal de Vielleville. The husband of Philippe de Montespedon having died in Piedmont without issue, she was left a young, rich and beautiful widow, and was sought in marriage by several noble suitors. Amongst these was the Marquis de Saluces, to whose attentions she seemed to listen favorably, and she permitted him to accompany her from Turin to Paris. It turned out, however, that the sly dame only wished to have the advantage of his escort on the journey; and when she arrived at its termination she cavalierly dismissed him, saying:—"Adieu, sir! your lodging is at the hostel des Ursins, and mine is at the hostel Saint Denis, close to that of the Augustins." The marquis still persisted in his suit, but as Philippe continued obdurate; he asserted that she had made him a formal promise of marriage, and cited her to appear before the court of parliament. She came there, attended by a numerous company of friends, and, having been desired by she president to hold up her hand, she was asked whether she had ever promised marriage to the marquis, who was then present in court. She answered upon her honor that she had not; and when the court proceeded to press her with further questions she exclaimed, with passionate warmth: "Gentlemen, I never was in a court of justice before; and this makes me fear that I may not answer properly. But to put a stop to all captious caviling and word-catching, I swear in the face of this assembly to God and the king,—to God under pain of eternal damnation to my soul; and to the king under the penalty of loss of honor and life,—that I have never given pledge or promise of marriage to the Marquis de Saluces, and, what is more, that I never thought of such a thing in my life. And if there is any one who will assert to the contrary, here is my chevalier whom I offer to maintain my words, which he knows are entirely true, and uttered by the lips of a lady of honor, if ever there was one. And this I do, trusting in God and my good right, that he will prove the plaintiff to be (begging the pardon of the court) a villainous liar." This spirited defence caused no little sensation in the audience; and the president told the registrar that he might put up his papers, for Madame la Marechale had taken another and much shorter road towards settling the dispute. Then, addressing the marquis, he asked:—"Well, sir, what say you to this challenge?" But the love, as well as the valor of the latter, was fast oozing away; and the craven knight answered by a very decided negative. "I want not," said he, "to take a wife by force; and if she does not wish to have me, I do not wish to have her." And so making a low obeisance to the court he prudently retired, and the fair Philippe heard no more of his pretensions to her hand.

* * *

COLOR OF THE OCEAN.

The waters of the globe exhibit various hues, which depend upon a variety of circumstances. The ocean absorbs all the prismatic colors except that of ultramarine, which is reflected in every direction. This is its true color in general, when seen apart from atmospheric influence, modified by depth; but every gleam of sunshine, passing clouds, winds, shoals, and sand-banks, affect its tints. Particular parts of the ocean show peculiar colors. The sea is white in the Gulf of Guinea, and black amid the Maldive Islands. Variously purple, red, and rose-colored waters occur in the higher parts of the Mediterranean, in the vermilion sea off California, the Red Sea, and in tracts along the coasts of Chili, Brazil, and Australia. Green water appears in the Persian Gulf, off the Arabian coast, and in connection with the deepest blue in the Arctic Ocean. These appearances are permanent, and so distinct, that ships have been seen partly in blue and partly in green water at the same time. These tints are occasioned by differently-colored animalcules, which swarm in countless myriads in the tracts in question. The same species of animalcules (*Trichodesmium erythræm*) which color the Red Sea, have been found in other similarly-tinted districts of the ocean. The green of the Arctic Seas is produced also by minute animals, which visit in spring the coast of Holland, and have been encountered in immense shoals migrating in the Atlantic. In the Antartic regions, Sir James Ross remarked repeatedly the change of color of the sea from light oceanic blue to a dirty brown, caused by ferruginous animalculæ. The phosphorescence of the ocean, a magnificent and imposing spectacle, when the waves scintillate with bright green sparks, or exhibit a long line of fire flashing in a thousand directions, is mainly caused by minute organic beings, which are phosphorescent while alive; a property retained by the gelatinous particles with which certain tracts of the deep are thickly charged —their dead and dismembered relics. At the same time, a disturbed electrical condition of the atmosphere may be most favorable to the phenomenon.

* * *

A NOVEL BOOTJACK.

A letter in the London Times, from a British officer in India, gives a startling account of the perils of elephant hunting, in which occurs the following description of how a proboscis was used as a bootjack:—

"Major Rogers had just had capital sport with a herd of elephants; his four guns had all been discharged, when an elephant made a charge at him from the skirts of the jungle. There was no help for it except to run; and for 400 yards the major kept just ahead, feeling at every step the animal's trunk trying to insinuate itself round his loins. A turn round a tree gave him a momentary advantage, which he made the most of by springing up into the branches (he was as nimble as a cat and as strong as a lion); one foot higher and he would have been out of the elephant's reach; but before he had time to draw up his legs the elephant had got him firmly clenched in the toils of his proboscis. Still, Rogers pulled against him, thinking it better to have his leg wrenched from the socket than to fall back bodily into the animal's power. The struggle, however, did not last long; for, to the delight of the pursued and the chagrin of the pursuer, the Wellington boot which the former wore slipped off, extricated the leg, and saved the life of poor Rogers. The dilemma, however, did not end here; for the elephant, finding himself baulked of his prey, after destroying the boot, took up his quarters beneath the branches, and kept his anticipated victim in the tree for twenty-four hours; when the tapal, or country postman, happening to pass by, Rogers gave him notice of his position; and on this being intimated to the nearest village, the elephant was frightened away by tom-toms and yelling. Had this occurred in a deserted part of the jungle, poor Rogers would indubitably have been starved to death in the tree."

* * *

A virtuous mind in a fair body is, indeed, a fine picture in a good light, and therefore it is no wonder that it makes the beautiful sex all over charms.

TO MY FATHER.

Upon seeing him looking at the Daguerreotypes of his Sons.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

My father, it *may* be
That thou wilt live to see
Us depart;
That the shadows on thy wall
Will reproachfully recall
To thy heart
Whose mother early died,
And who scattered far and wide
Through the world.

Then thy passion will be o'er,
And thine angry words no more
Will be hurled,
Like fiery, poisoned darts,
At the sore and quivering hearts
Beating sad,
Thinking that thou dost not care
Whether sorrowful they are,
Or are glad.

Father, *it may be yet*
That heavy from regret,
All alone,
Thou wilt sit amid the shade,
By life's lengthened shadows made,
Making moan,
For the young lives cast to waste;
For the labor so misplaced,
Of the past;
And wilt for thy children yearn,
When they can no more return,
At the last.

Thou wilt name each vanished child
And the baby undefiled
That she gave,
To thy love and to thy care,
When she turned her otherwhere
At the grave.
And I *know* thy heart will ache
For thy hapless children's sake,
And thine own,
When thou sittest 'mid the shade,
By life's lengthened shadows made,
All alone.

◆

AFTER THE STORM.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"What's the matter with our Emily? Is her bird dead? Or has she torn her new dress? She looks the image of despair—a perfect lay-figure for a poet! I wish Tennyson could see her!"

"Some trouble with Edward, I believe," answered a girlish voice.

"Ah, that's it!" said the other, laughing. "A storm in the atmosphere of love! Tears for rain, apple-blossoms for snow, and sighs for the angry wind. No great harm done to the garden-beds. The first hour of sunshine will restore everything to health and beauty."

"I am not so sure of that," said Aunt Lucy, lifting her mild, but now serious eyes to the face of the last speaker, a young man whose years were too few to have given opportunity for serious thought or earnest feeling. "I am not so sure of that," she repeated, with added emphasis. "In the path of every storm will be found some ruin that time can never restore. The riven flowers and broken stems that lie in the garden paths, revive not on the returning sunshine; but wither up forever in his scorching beams."

"What a sober face you do put on, Aunt Lucy!" It was the young girl who had answered her brother's question about Emily. "Sister's little 'tiffs' with Edward, are of no more account than the wind that tosses roughly a rose-bud. No harm done, but a little good, it may be; strength gained, as the stem of the rose-bud is strengthened by its reaction to the wind."

But Aunt Lucy shook her head.

"I have no faith in the good done to hearts by the storms of human passion. No matter how clearly the sun may shine afterwards, it can never restore the lost branch that fell in the strife, nor cover the unsightly wound that was left behind. There is always something lost in every storm—some goodly ship, on the sea of life, goes down, and is seen no more forever."

The brother and sister looked at each other and smiled. The words of Aunt Lucy were, in their view, far too serious for the occasion. What was a "little tiff," as the sister called Emily's misunderstanding with her lover. A mere ripple in the quiet atmosphere of their lives, to be wholly lost in the returning calmness.

But, Aunt Lucy was right. There is something lost in every storm, that no returning sunshine can restore. And lover's quarrels, so lightly esteemed, are no exceptions to the rule. We may call them summer storms, that purify the atmosphere of love; but love's atmosphere requires no such purification. They indicate the existence of mutually antagonistic elements, which the closer contact of married life will only quicken into new activity.

Emily's trouble with Edward Floyd, her lover, had its origin in a trifle. He had dropped a word thoughtlessly, which gave offence, and her quick temper had betrayed her into a reply, the cutting nature of which excited his indignation, and they parted in anger. A whole week passed before Edward renewed his visits; and it was during this period of clouds and tears, that the brief conversation we have given took place. Emily had not heard the remark of Aunt Lucy; but she experienced its truth when the storm passed over. There were blossoming places made desolate in her heart, which no sunshine could restore to life, beauty and fragrance; and she mourned in secret over the passion-wrought ruins.

There intervened only a few months between this time and the wedding-day; a period which did not pass free from disturbance. The temper of Emily was very uncertain, and Edward Floyd was very thoughtless. He was all the while doing or saying something that provoked her anger, which blazed up the moment it kindled. Then followed coldness, temporary estrangement, tears and wretchedness; and to these succeeded forgiveness and the returning sunshine. But always the sunshine looked down upon some new places which the tempest had rifled of beauty. Joy might cover them in time; but heart-flowers would bloom there no more forever.

Only a week before the wedding-day there was a storm, fiercer in character than usual, and so much was Emily excited on the occasion, that intimate friends were troubled lest it should cause a separation between the affianced parties.

"If it were not for the disgrace of the thing, and the trouble likely to follow," Edward said to his most intimate friend, "I would break my engagement. I never saw a woman with so uncertain a temper!"

The friend soothed him as best he could, and exerted his influence on the side of reconciliation. Again the sky was clear, and the atmosphere calm and genial. But the storm had left disfiguring footprints here and there. All was not as before.

"Dear Emily," said Aunt Lucy, on the evening before the wedding-day, speaking with unusual earnestness—"I must give you one sentence of warning. There have been too many little misunderstandings between you and Edward—too many storms in the summer sky of your lives. As you value your happiness let there be an end of this. The tender flowers of love cannot flourish in an atmosphere that is disturbed by frequent storms."

"Oh, never fear for us, Aunt Lucy!" replied the happy-hearted girl. "Edward and I understand each other. I am quick, you know; but it's soon over. The sunshine comes brightly after the rain."

"Sudden storms are often the most destructive," said Aunt Lucy.

But Emily laughed gaily at Aunt Lucy's fears, and the warning was unheeded.

It was just three weeks after the wedding day. Emily was sitting by the window, waiting for Edward's return. The twilight was beginning to fall, and every moment she expected to see his beloved face. Three weeks! How swiftly they had passed! How happy all the hours had been! It seemed to Emily, as if she were translated into a new world.

"How late he stays this evening!" she said to herself; and, as the young bride leaned closer to the window, she remembered that, for several days, he had returned something later than usual.

At this moment a lady tripped up the steps and rung the bell. She was an intimate friend, and, in passing, had just called to exchange a pleasant word or two.

"Waiting for Edward, little wife!" said this light-hearted friend, as she kissed Emily, who was still near to the window. "You will have to wait, and for some time yet," she added, affecting a serious tone.

"Why so?" inquired Emily.

"For the best of all reasons. I met him just now, going home with a lady who lives far away from here."

Instantly the countenance of Emily changed, on observing which, the thoughtless friend said—

"Aha! Jealous already! And with some reason I'm thinking; for the lady is both young and handsome. It's the second time, this week that I have seen them together."

"Who is she?" asked Emily, affecting an indifference which she did not feel.

"I can't answer the question. Some old flame, I presume," said the lady, not dreaming that her words were entering the heart of her young friend like arrows from a bow. A few minutes she lingered, and then fluttered away, unconscious of the wrong she had done.

As she turned from the door, Emily went, with quick, but silent footsteps to her chamber, and sitting down there, tried to compose her thoughts. But, all the elements of her soul were in confusion. She had taken the words of her friend in their widest meaning, and they had stung her into a paroxysm of jealous madness. These recent late returns were all explained now. Not business, but a young and beautiful lady had detained him from his wife!

The simple truth was this. As Edward left his store that evening, a lady, the wife of a friend, was passing, and as she lived in his neighborhood, he, very naturally, joined her in her walk homewards. Politeness led him to accompany her to the door of her dwelling, which stood a few squares beyond his own. Having done this, he hurried back, every thought and feeling true to his bride. He did not see her face at the window, nor find her, as usual, in the parlor. A little disappointed at this, he went to the sitting-room; but she was not there.

"Emily!"

He called, but there was no answer.

"Not home!" he said aloud, in a tone of disappointment.

"Emily!" he called more earnestly. As nothing but the echo of his voice came back to him, he stood, for some moments, with an irresolute air, like one whose thoughts had been thrown back upon him suddenly. Then passing from the sitting room, he went up to their chamber, not so much in expectation of finding his wife there, as in obedience to a restless impulse. On entering, he was startled to meet her, standing in the centre of the apartment, awaiting him, with a pale countenance, stern eyes, and tightly closed lips.

"Emily!" he cried, starting forward.

But she stepped back a pace or two as he advanced, and waved him off with her hand.

Edward now observed that she had her shawl on her arm, and that her bonnet lay on the bed.

"What, under heaven, is the matter?" said the young man, growing excited, and again moving towards his wife.

"Off! Don't touch me! Hypocrite!"

There was a fierce, indignant energy about the young wife, which showed that she was altogether in earnest.

It was soon Edward's turn to step backward, and to show an indignant aspect.

"Fine language for your husband's ears!" said the young man.

"Husband!" There was a contemptuous curl of Emily's lip.

This was more than the outraged young man could bear. Without a word in reply, he turned and left the chamber. As he did so, Emily snatched her bonnet from the bed, and hurrying after, passed him on the stairs, and went out at the street door, seeming to her astonished husband like one possessed by a fury.

Hypocrite! How that word stung him! How it outraged all his inborn love of truth and right seeming! It was the first time, in his whole life, that any one had applied to him an epithet—of all epithets the most revolting. And that it should come from the lips of his young wife, was worst of all!

For a time Edward was stunned by this unexplained outrage, and flight of his wife. He had no key to the mystery; and, after the strong turbulence, into which his mind had been thrown, subsided, and feeling grew calm again, he sternly resolved to make no inquiry after her, and to ask no explanation of her conduct.

"She has left me," he said to himself, bitterly, but resolutely—"left me without cause, and I shall take no steps to secure her return. Hypocrite! That was the crowning outrage! Hypocrite!"

Edward Floyd passed an almost sleepless night; but morning found him unchanged in his feelings. The more he thought of Emily's causeless attack upon him, the more indignant he felt.

"If this is the beginning, what is to be hoped for in the end?" he said, bitterly. "I knew her temper was uncertain, and sometimes violent; but I was not prepared for this."

The hasty step of Emily was not approved by her friends at home, who, as soon as they understood what she had done, urged her immediate return to her husband. But pride would not consent to this, even though calmer feelings brought repentance. All the next day she waited, restless, expectant, anxious, for some word from Edward; but no word came from him. The second day passed, also, without a sign. On the morning of the third day an exclamation of painful surprise from her brother startled her. He handed her, in silence, the newspaper he had been reading, with his finger on an advertisement. A glance gave her its meaning. Edward had placed his furniture in the hands of an auctioneer, who was about offering it at public sale.

"It is not yet too late," urged Aunt Lucy, with tears in her gentle eyes. "Write to Edward. Ask him to call here. Say that you have erred and repent. Do not let him go to this extremity."

But Emily's pride and jealous suspicions, deeply distressed as she was, were yet unsubdued, and she heeded not this counsel. She did not really believe that her husband would go to the extremity of selling off their furniture. But she was mistaken. The sale did take place.

The next step, on the part of the unhappy young man, was to sell out his business and leave the city, without even seeing his wretched wife. But he sent her, as a last remembrancer, this brief communication:

"EMILY—Whatever may have been, to me the unknown cause, of your violent separation from your husband, let me say, in going out forever from my native city, and in putting thousands of miles between us, that if a suspicion of infidelity has found a place in your mind, that suspicion is wholly groundless. Never, in thought, word, or act have I been unfaithful to my vows. With you, alone, is the cause of this alienation. You, alone, are responsible!"

Pride would not let him give a single sign of pain, though his heart was crushed, and his anguish more than he could bear.

"What is the meaning of this, dear Emily?" said, among other sympathizing friends, the lady whose lightly-spoken words had caused the deep calamity. "Why did you separate yourself from Edward?"

"Simply on your evidence against him," said the wretched young woman, with strong emphasis.

"Mine? Mine?" The lady looked frightened. "You are trifling, Emily!"

"Of all subjects, this is the last upon which I could possibly trifle," was answered, with a seriousness of manner that alarmed the lady still more. "It was from you that I had the first intimation of his intimacy with another."

"From me? Are you beside yourself, Emily? I am lost in amazement!"

"I speak in sober earnest. It was from your lips I received the fatal intelligence that, while I awaited, in all love and confidence, his return at evening, he was passing the time with another!"

"You are dreaming. No such intelligence was ever derived from me!" said the lady, almost with indignation.

"Do you remember the last time you called at my house?" inquired Emily.

"I do."

"And what you told me then about having met Edward gallanting a lady in the street?"

"Can it be possible," exclaimed the friend, flushing with surprise, and then turning pale, "that from my light words all this trouble has come? Do you know who the lady was?"

Emily shook her head.

"It was Mrs. Phillips, the last woman in the world of whom you have cause to be jealous. As a mere act of politeness, Edward was accompanying her home."

"You said she was young and handsome, and that this was the second time you had met them together."

"I was but jesting!"

"Fatal jesting! It has wrecked my peace for life!" And a deep cry of pain burst from the heart of Emily.

The storm of jealous passion was over, and all was still as death; but oh! the ruin it had left behind. The hopeless loss; the cruel disfigurations; the place made desolate forever!

Months after Edward Floyd's hasty sundering of all the ties that held him to his native place, he received, in a far distant city, a letter from his unhappy, repentant wife, in which, after relating the cause of her sudden fit of jealous anger, she made full acknowledgment of her error, and begged him to return. So full of loving ardor—so passionate in its pleadings was this letter, that the miserable young man, whose heart was an "aching void," yielded, and flew back again to the wife he had, in such foolish haste, deserted.

Their meeting was full of tenderness, and full of hope for the future. Both were wiser for the painful experience; and both more sober in spirit. But alas! if the wild tempest had passed, and the sun came out in mid heavens again, the brightness but seemed to show the storm's fearful destruction, as well as the remaining verdure. Everywhere was something to remind them of passion's wild frenzy; and daily were they made sadly conscious of having lost forever, in the war of elements, some precious things held by the heart of priceless value.

Aunt Lucy was right, and her prophecies fulfilled to the letter. Summer storms and lovers' quarrels may purify the atmosphere, but they mar the earth at times, fearfully. As for the latter, they always destroy, and never fructify. Memory did not, could not sleep. No sunshine, gentle rain, or refreshing dews had power to obliterate marks of that storm's wild fury, which, if they served to give motives of self-control, were yet sad mementoes that dimmed, through all the after years of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd, the brightness of their wedded life.

Beware of storms in the atmosphere of love! The veriest trifles may sometimes arouse them; but they never pass away without leaving the footprints of desolation behind them. Something is lost to the heart, and lost forever!

◆

PRESENCE OF MIND IN PRESENTS.—Every present should have a hidden meaning in it; for instance, if a gentleman is desperately in love with a young lady, he can not do better than to give her a foot-muff, as it implies, in the openest manner, that he is a muff always ready to lie at her feet. And if a young lady is dying to be married to a young gentleman, she can tell him so in the most flattering, insinuating way, by giving him a most beautiful embroidered slipper—mind, only one, as it is the very oddness of the present which confesses to him that, to complete the happy pair, he alone can supply the handsome *fellow*.

◆

EFFECT OF FEMALE BEAUTY.—We read in the "Lives of the Fathers" a story of a child that was brought up in the wilderness, from his infancy, by an old hermit. Now come to man's estate, he saw, by chance, two comely women, wandering in the woods: he asked the old man what creatures they were; he told him. After a while talking, the hermit demanded of him, which was the pleasantest sight that he ever saw in his life: he readily replied, the two he spied in the wilderness. So that, without doubt, there is some secret loadstone in a beautiful woman.

◆

NEVER marry a girl who is fond of being always in the street—who is fond of running to night meetings—who has a jeweled hand and empty head—who will see her mother work and toil, while she lies in bed and reads novels, or feigns sickness—and is ashamed to own her.

◆

"BILL, you young scamp, if you had your due, you'd get a good whipping." "I know it, daddy, but bills are not always paid when they become due." The agonized father trembled lest his hopeful son should be suddenly snatched from him.

FOR YOUNG HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

Whatever may be the difference in temper and disposition between a newly-married couple, the imploring request of Eve to her husband should be written in undying characters on each of their hearts:—

"While yet we live—scarce one short hour, perhaps—
Between us two let there be peace."

How necessary is this divine conjugal ingredient of felicity, when we reflect how transitory is our earthly existence!—

"Make the most of life you may—
Life is short, and wears away;
Both alike are mine and thine,
Hastening quick to their decline!
Thine's a summer, mine no more,
Though repeated to three score!
Three score summers, when they're gone,
Will appear as short as one."

To attain this happiness is the mutual duty of both husband and wife; but much depends upon a proper knowledge of their relation towards each other. Man is naturally the protector of woman; his superior reasoning faculties, and muscular power and courage to employ it, qualify him for the office. Women are more sensitive to the gentler feelings of human nature than men; and, consequently, she is more enabled to accommodate herself to his taste than he is to her's. She is endowed with flexibility and affection; and is, therefore, more adapted to yield without constraint. Rousseau truthfully observes, that "the first and most important quality of a woman is gentleness. Made to obey a being so imperfect as man, often full of vices, and often full of faults, she ought early to learn to suffer even injustice, and to bear wrong from a husband without complaining. It is not for his sake—it is for her own that she ought to be gentle."

The man with feminine mind is unfit for masculine duties; the woman with masculine mind is unfit for feminine duties. Of the truth of the latter assertion we need only refer to Queen Elizabeth, whose life was a tissue of intrigues, spleen, envy, and reproaches, and whose death was quite in keeping with her unwomanly career. And the same misery is entailed upon all women who aspire to rank with men, and who fancy themselves enslaved by the language of admiration and passion. Woman is naturally in subjection to man; she links herself to him, "like music set to noble words," and the idea of dependence upon him springs as spontaneously from her mind as does her instinctive and irresistible love of offspring. In the splendid diction of the immortal Milton—

"For contemplation, he, and valor, formed;
For softness, she, and sweet attractive grace.
He for God only; she for God in him.
His fair large front, and eyes sublime, declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks,
Round from his parted forelock, manly hung,
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
Her unadorned golden tresses wore—
Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets waved—
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
Subjection; but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded—by him best received.
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet reluctant amorous delay."

◆

A WELSH GHOST STORY.

A short time since, at a farm-house at Kilkah, near Mold, the landlord had left a bailiff in possession of the furniture and stock for rent arrears. The man of law put in his son—a green lad—as his deputy, the latter being inordinately afraid of ghosts; which circumstance, as the sequel proved, was known to the distressed farmer. The young bailiff was put to sleep in the same bed with the farmer's son, and the moon being about the full, the bedroom was tolerably light. They had not been long in bed before there was a terrible clanking of chains, with groans and other "eldritch" sounds heard on the stairs and landing. The farmer's son exclaimed:—"O Lord! the ghost, the ghost!" He jumped out of bed, followed by the young bailiff in a frenzy of terror, who seized him round the waist for protection against the spiritual intruder, which stalked into the room arrayed in white. He soon departed, however, leaving the two youths in possession of the field; but when they were about to step into bed again, lo! all but the bedstead had vanished, apparently in the train of the ghost. Not only that, but the whole of the furniture and out-door stock seemed to have likewise disappeared, and the landlord's claims for rent were met by an empty house.

◆

A HORRID SCENE.

A strange circumstance has just taken place at Herisan, the capital of Inner Appenzell, in Switzerland, showing how much in these countries of old liberties civilization is behind hand in some matters. A young girl of nineteen, some months back, assassinated her rival. Her lover was arrested with her, and, as she accused him of the crime, both were put to the torture. The girl yielded to the pain, and confessed her crime; the young man held firm in his denial: the former was condemned to death, and on the seventh of the month was decapitated with the sword, in the market-place of Herisan. This fact is itself a startling one, but the details are just as strange. For two hours the woman was able to struggle against four individuals charged with the execution. After the first hour the strength of the woman was still so great that the men were obliged to desist; the authorities were consulted, but they declared that justice ought to follow its course. The struggle then recommenced, with greater intensity, and despair seemed to have redoubled the woman's force. At the end of another hour she was at last bound by the hair to a stake, and the sword of the executioner then carried the sentence into effect.

◆

HONESTY OF THOUGHT.—Honesty of thought is to look truth in the face, not in the side face, but in the full front; not merely to look at truth when found, but to seek it till found. There must be no tampering with conviction; no hedging or mental prevarication; no making "the wish father to the thought;" no fearing to arrive at a particular result. To think honestly, then, is to think freely; freedom and honesty of thought are, truly, but interchangeable terms. For how can he think honestly who dreads his being landed in this or that conclusion? Such an one has already predetermined in his heart how he shall think, and what he shall believe. Perfect truth, like perfect love, casteth not fear.

◆

THE EYE OF WOMAN.—A modern writer gives the following enumeration of a female eye:—"The glare, the stare, the sneer, the invitation, the defiance, the denial, the look of love, the flash of rage, the sparkling of hope, the languishment of softness, the squint of suspicion, the fire of jealousy, and the lustre of pleasure."

◆

THE BEST INVESTMENT.—Dr. Franklin, speaking of education, says:—"If a man empties his purse into his head, no man can take it away from him. An investment of knowledge always pays the best interest."

THE OLD MAID'S PROTEST.

BY CLARA SYDNEY.

An "old maid!" *am* I an old maid? I heard them call me so; and I'm afraid it is true, or I should not have felt it so much. And they said, "old maids are abominable," "not to be respected or pitied;" but *why?* Ah! they didn't say "why"—they were satisfied with making the assertion, and then enjoying the approving laugh of their husbands. I wanted to ask why it was not full as abominable to marry for a home, or for the sake of escaping the name of "old maid," as to remain single? I wanted to ask why an old maid deserved no sympathy or respect, when the only reason on earth why she wasn't enlisted in the service of one of creation's lords, was, because not one of them whom she could love well enough to call "husband" ever asked her to be his wife. I wanted to *say* that not one woman out of twenty ever got the man who had power to touch the master chord of her soul—the man that of *all* men she would have chosen, her own true spirit's everlasting mate; and to ask why she who refused to rest in the arms of one man while her bosom ached and her heart bled for the presence of another, was not more to be respected and commended than she who did not refuse to do this? All this, and more, I *wanted* to say; but knowing that I should thus but bring a burst of ridicule upon my devoted head, I kept silence, but my thoughts burned within me while my companions rattled idly on, making "old maids" the burden of their merry talk.

◆

HOPE.

What a strange thing is Hope,
It lures the spirit on
To some still future prop,
When that just grasped has gone.

How oft the heart would break
But for Hope's promise fair;
Yet dreams, from which we wake,
Those siren whispers are.

AUGUSTA MOORE.

◆

A CAPITAL "SELL."

A few days since, a spruce looking girl who was tripping along through the Park, at a moderate pace, with a small bundle under her arm, was accosted by a gentleman, who asked permission to accompany her. "Certainly," said she, "just hold my bundle while I tie my stocking;" and, presenting it to him as she spoke, instantly ran off at full speed. The gentleman felt a slight movement in the bundle, and in great trepidation trotted after her, repeatedly bawling out:—"Here, you woman, come back and take your baby." Soon a crowd gathered to learn the nature of his distress. "A woman gave me her baby to hold, and then ran off," piteously exclaimed the man of burden. "Take it off to the almshouse," shouted some half-dozen voices. "Let us see it first," cried one, more sagacious than the rest; and, as a large coarse towel was unfolded, out jumped a full-grown cat, that scampered off amid the vociferous shouts and laughter of all present, save one, who looked awfully sad. It seems that a lady, desiring to rid her house of one of these animals, whose petty larcenies in the kitchen were a source of great annoyance, had commissioned the servant girl to take it out of the neighborhood and drop it.

◆

CARLYLE AND THE NEEDLEWOMEN.

"Many things have been written about shirtmaking; but here perhaps is the saddest thing of all, not written any where till now, that I know of. Shirts, by the thirty thousand, are made at two-pence-half-penny each; and in the meanwhile no needlewoman, distressed or other, can be procured in London by any housewife to give, for fair wages, fair help in sewing. Ask any thrifty house mother, high or low, and she will answer. In high houses and in low there is the same answer:—No *real* needlewoman, 'distressed' or other, has been found attainable in any of the houses I frequent. Imaginary needlewomen, who demand considerable wages, and have a deepish appetite for beer and viands I hear of everywhere; but their sewing proves too often a distracted puckering and botching; not sewing, only the fallacious hope of it, a fond imagination of the mind. Good seamstresses are to be hired in every village; and in London, with its famishing thirty thousand, not at all—or hardly. Is not no-government beautiful in human business? To such length has the leave-alone principle carried it, by way of organizing labor in this affair of shirtmaking."

◆

THE ANATOMY OF A COQUETTE.

A coquette is a female general who builds her fame on her advances. A coquette may be compared to tinder, which lays itself out to catch sparks, but does not always succeed in lighting up a match. Men are perverse creatures; they fly that which pursues them, and pursue that which flies them. Forwardness, therefore, on the part of a female, makes them draw back, and backwardness draws them forward. There will always be this difference between a coquette and a woman of sense and modesty,—that while one courts every man, every man will court the other. When the coquette settles into an old maid, it is not unusual to see her as staid and formal as she was previously versatile:—

"Thus weather-cocks, which for awhile
Have turned about with every blast,
Grown old, and destitute of oil,
Rust to a joint, and fix at last."

◆

THE BEE.

That within so small a body should be contained apparatus for converting the "virtuous sweets" which it collects into one kind of nourishment for itself, another for the common brood, a third for the royal, glue for its carpentry, wax for its cells, poison for its enemies, honey for its master, with a proboscis as long as the body itself, microscopic in its several parts, telescopic in its mode of action, with a sting so infinitely sharp that, were it magnified by the same glass which makes a needle's point seem a quarter of an inch, it would yet itself be invisible, and this, too, a hollow tube; that all these varied operations and contrivances should be inclosed within half an inch of length, and two grains of matter, while in the same "small room" the "large heart" of at least thirty distinct insects is contained, is surely enough to crush all thoughts of atheism and materialism.

◆

A GROAN FROM UNDERNEATH THE BEDCLOTHES.—The woman that gives her husband the last cup of tea, or will not allow him to put his feet on the fender after dinner, or makes him jump out of bed to put the candle out, is no longer worthy to be classed amongst womankind, for such acts of cruelty only belong to women that are unkind.

◆

YOUTH is the golden period of life, and every well-spent moment will be like good seed planted in an auspicious season.

A LOVER'S SERENADE.

BY THOMAS WYAT.

The stars from heaven are peeping
Less beautiful than thee;
Come while the world is sleeping,
To change love's vows with me.

Come with thy bright eyes beaming,
Brightly in beauty's spell;
Come while the earth is dreaming,
Our tale of love to tell.

Night's holiest guards are keeping
Their vigil round thy tower;
Then while the world is sleeping,
Sweet lady, quit thy bower.

The stars from heaven are beaming
Less beautiful than thee;
Come while the earth is dreaming,
To change love's vows with me.

◆

THE LILY'S MISTAKE.

LOVE'S BLOSSOM AND ITS FRUIT.

BY AN OLD CONTRIBUTOR.

"Mr Henderson, will you give me Alice? I love her, and wish to make her my wife."

Mr. Henderson had lowered the newspaper, that he was reading by the shaded gas light, to nod to the youthful pair who stole into the library. He seemed a little surprised at the intrusion, but reverted at once to the "shipping list" which he was reading.

"Brig J. F. Henderson," he murmured, "Larkins, from Chicago, 1200 bushels wheat—pretty good cargo that—will pay well. Ha! what do you want, Allie?"

"Father!"

"Mr. Henderson, will you give me Alice? I love her, and wish to make her my wife."

"Your wife! You love Alice, and wish to make her your wife!" returned Mr. Henderson, with a startled air and lowering brow.

He looked scrutinizingly for several moments at the two who, hand clasped in hand, knelt at his feet. Very handsome they looked—perfect types it seemed to him, of masculine and feminine beauty. The unsunned morning snow-wreath, which the night-clouds twine about the casement, is not fairer than was her pure brow. Her eyes were of the deepest and darkest blue, with a wondrous power of change that puzzled the chance recipient of their glowing glances to decide upon their hue; and, most rare accompaniment of that exquisite complexion, masses of raven hair, in clustering bands, framed the perfect oval of her face. Her petite figure, cast in the most exquisite mould of feminine proportions, with its own peculiar swaying grace, reminded one of nothing so much as the lily—that loveliest of flowers, and had gained her the pet name of "Lily," among all her friends.

Mark Stanford's fair, regular features, his glossy, curling hair of sunny brown—his light and rather restless eyes, were very beautiful, but a wondrous contrast to the pure, noble lineaments of the "Lily" bent there by his side. An impression of a want of power in Mark—a vague, general impression of his unworthiness of Alice, came into Mr. Henderson's mind as he gazed. Hitherto he had seen little and known little of Mark Stanford. He recollected now that, when, after reading the evening papers and perhaps writing a letter or two, he strolled into the drawing-room to ask Alice for a little music, he had several times been annoyed by finding Mark Stanford sitting beside her upon the sofa, and so evidently monopolizing her thoughts and conversation that he could not, with politeness, make his anticipated request. He remembered, also, that though Alice would start up on seeing his annoyed expression, and move towards the piano-forte, yet there was an evident reluctance, new, and till now unaccounted for, in the movement.

He knew it all now—saw everything—Mark Stanford's frequent visits and their cause—the Lily's reluctance to give him his evening treat of music, which, for years, had blotted out, with the divine harmonies of inspired composers, the thousand jangling discords of the Babels of commerce, among which his days were passed, and sent him to pleasant dreams upon his nightly pillow.

He saw it all now—saw that his life was about to be made desolate—nay, already was desolate—saw that this weak, fair-faced youth, had wiled with a few honied words, the love of that fresh young heart quite away from him, from his wife, from the home of her childhood and womanhood; had caused passionate visions of delight to pass across the unsunned mirror of her maiden soul—visions that should never, never meet their beautiful realization.

With a great, but repressed pang the merchant averted his gaze from the restless eyes of Mark Stanford, and looked straight into the deep orbs of his Lily.

"Do you love Mark Stanford?" he said very softly, "and do you wish to take him for your husband?"

"Father!"

That simple word was all she uttered, but the swift, rosy blushes, that rose to her white brow were not more eloquent. He bent forward and touched with his lips the snowy, veined eyelids that closed beneath the gentle, loving pressure; he clasped for a moment the tiny hand in his broad palm. Then he said, in a voice from which he vainly sought to banish all traces of emotion.

"Go now, my Lily. I will speak with you again. Ask your mother to come to me, my darling."

Then, as if half-reluctantly, he gave his hand to Mr. Stanford, in silence, and sinking back in his chair saw the two move down the long, dusky room, hand in hand, and disappear in the shadows that filled its lower space. The murmur of some low spoken words in Mark Stanford's voice, and a half-broken sob that he knew was from the Lily's full heart, reached his ear. Then the door opened—for a moment the two, with hands still enclasped, stood framed in the arched and carved door-place, through which the light from the hall beyond was streaming, and looked back at him. Then they silently turned and went out—the door was closed, and he was alone. Alone, and sad and desolate!

The thought had come to him vaguely, sometimes, that Alice would marry, but he had never contemplated her marriage as an inevitable occurrence, a fixed fact, until now. Under any, the most favorable circumstances, he would have looked upon her marriage sadly, but now he was more than sad. It was not even that he knew nothing of Mark Stanforth—the needed knowledge might be gained—but that he feared much. There was no power, and but negative goodness expressed in his face, while the restless movement of his beautiful eyes, and the delicate flexile lines of his smiling mouth and smooth chin betokened an unstable character.

With his paper lying forgotten upon the floor, where he had dropped it in his surprise, Mr. Henderson sat leaning his head upon his hands in deep thought, until the opening of the door again aroused him. Mrs. Henderson came hurrying in, with a perplexed and pained expression upon her fair and usually placid face, and advanced straight towards her husband. She took his outstretched hand, and dropping into a chair by his side, burst into tears.

"Laura, did you know anything of this?" was Mr. Henderson's first question. "Have you suspected that an attachment was growing up between Mark Stanford and our Lily?"

"Never, husband; the thought has not once occurred to me, but you know how much I have been engaged of late in nursing my dear mother."

"True, my love. I do not think of blaming you," replied Mr. Henderson, with a re-assuring glance, for Mrs. Henderson's words implied an apology. "But how did he gain the entree of the house? You know I leave all matters of that kind to you, and when I have seen him here, he seemed so insignificant that I never thought of inquiring about him. Bah! I have always despised pretty men, and shall do so more than ever the remainder of my days."

"He *is* very handsome," Mrs. Henderson replied, with a little sigh. "But, really, I do not see that he is to blame for that. He is very young still, and he may improve and settle down to business."

"So you do know something of him. Tell me what you know."

"Only this, husband. His mother was a sister of Judge Black. She is dead, and Mark is an orphan. The Judge was always very fond of him in his life-time, and left him a little property, and, besides that, left his fortunes to Mrs. Black's charge. She is very fond of him, too, and has him down here whenever he can be spared from business, for he is clerk for a wholesale firm in New York, and his aunt intends to advance the sum necessary for a partnership before long. Mrs. Black brought him here, a year ago, when he was visiting her, to Alice's birth-day party; and, as she has Alice frequently with her, the two have seen a good deal of each other. And I have been so occupied with other things, that I never thought of its coming to this, or I might have prevented it—perhaps."

The very doubtful tone in which Mrs. Henderson pronounced the last word of her little speech, brought a shadowy smile to her husband's lips.

"There spoke volumes for the omnipotence of young Love, my dear," he said. "Young Love that 'laughs at locksmiths,' and eludes the vigilance of duennas and careful mammas. But," and the shadow of sadness again settled upon his face, "it seems that the mischief is done now, and the falling in love of this young pair cannot be prevented. Their marriage can possibly. Is it better to try to prevent it?"

"Indeed I cannot tell, husband. I feel that our Lily is worthy of a more sterling man—I feel sure that in some respects her highest development, as a moral and intellectual being, will not, cannot be attained as the wife of Mark Stanford; and I have a strange fear that, if she marries him, she will find that she has made her whole life, henceforth, a long mistake. But she believes that she loves him now, and is ready to put the utmost faith in him, even to the extent of taking him for her temporal guide and companion."

"With true womanly trust, Laura, and with all love's blindness! Well, poor child, she is only fulfilling her destiny. Would that it might have been a brighter one, for though, in point of fortune and position, I have no right to look higher for Alice, yet I have a distrust of the young man, which at present I am unable to overcome. I will make inquiries to-morrow, and if I find that Stanford's character is not entirely irreproachable, I will not allow the engagement to take place."

"Yet you must be cautious, husband. You know that people will talk about it if we dismiss Mark Stanford—they will say that if Alice had been our own child we would have done differently—that we wish to prevent her marriage, and to keep her for our own companionship."

"Laura, do you think it possible that such very foolish and malicious things can be said of us? Is not Alice in all respects as our own child? Could any father love his daughter more?"

"I think not, indeed, my dear; and no mother loves her child more fondly, I am sure, than I have loved Alice since I first took her in my arms—a pretty, smiling infant of a twelve-month's age. For seventeen years she has filled up that great blank of our childless existence. How I used to long, as I sat alone in these great rooms, for the prattle of a child's merry voice, and the pressure of little dimpled hands, and how I used to dream at night of cherub faces and rosy lips saying, lispingly, 'Mamma,' till we took Lily from the arms of her dying mother, and brought her home to be our own. Oh, husband, how can we give her up, and see her go from us now?"

Mr. Henderson drew his weeping wife to his bosom, and said, soothingly:—

"Let us still hope that she may not go from us. Our Lily must have lived out her woman's destiny—only I had hoped to give her to one eminently worthy of her. If we find Mark Stanford unworthy, let us hope that she will be willing to resist this infatuation and remain in the sanctuary of her home. Let us go now to the dining-room, and find if she loves this Mark Stanford so well as to be willing to trust him more than us."

* * * * *

A month later Mr. Henderson sat in his library, at evening, and read his papers. But it was not the shipping-list which now fixed his attention. He had read and re-read—and each time the expression of his compressed mouth grew deeper in sadness—the following announcement:—

"Married, on the 16th inst., by the Rev. James Fastbind, Mr. Mark Stanford, of New York, to Miss Alice Henderson, adopted daughter of J. F. Henderson, of this city."

"Mrs. Mark Stanford," the old man murmured, "Alice Henderson—only my adopted daughter—and so that popinjay came and stole her away, and left me very sad and desolate—yes, desolate," he added, stretching out his hand to his wife, who just then entered the room, "and utterly lonely but for you. Remember this, Laura, if I should die before you, a home must be always kept for our Lily here. God grant she may not be forced to fly to it from sorrow and despair."

"Amen," said Mrs. Henderson, faintly, and then there was a silence until the clock upon the landing outside pealed forth the hour for retiring, and they went through the dim luxurious rooms, that seemed so empty now of all but shadows and stillness, to the couch where rest was chased away by vague, but not the less anxious fears for her who but yesterday had gone from them a bride.

Mr. Henderson had made every necessary inquiry in relation to Mark Stanford, and had learned nothing essentially to his disadvantage. That was the utmost that could be said. The young man's character was one of negative good—no positive evil could be asserted of him—and in the same way neither could any positive good. And so, when Alice clung to her first love with all the ardor of her deep, passionate nature, from which the icy exterior had all melted away in the warmth of the hidden fires kindled by the touch of love, Mr. and Mrs. Henderson could only consent, with trembling anxiety for the result, to her marriage. And so, all trustingly, she had placed her hand in that of Mark Stanford, and, turning her back upon her home,—leaving "father and mother—" she had gone out with him, to walk in his world, far apart from all the beautiful associations and the hallowed affections of her youth.

For a time she was very happy—wildly happy—coming home at unexpected times for flying visits, with her beautiful face radiant with joy and hope. Then followed a change—slight, at first,—and only to be discerned by the eyes of watchful love—and these noting it strove, with well-meant self-deception, to *hope* it was but the shadow of her new-found maternal cares. But soon after there came whispers of reckless extravagance, of dissipation—insane in its extent at times,—of high play and siren influence too easily gaining sway over a weak mind—and all these whispers Rumor connected with the name of Mark Stanford.

Years passed on and whispers came no more; but instead, Rumor, trumpet-tongued, heralded far and wide the errors, and the vices, and the crimes of Mark Stanford. It told of bankruptcy, of ruinous play, of drunken debauchery, of a luxurious establishment that was not the home of his wife. It told of poverty for wife and children, lightly enough to be borne if, instead of coldness, and neglect, and blows, and curses, there had been but love in the poor shelter to which they had flown.

So passed away more bitter years, and Alice still clung to her unworthy husband, and resisted all entreaties to return to the dear old home, where the warmest welcome and the most loving care awaited her. From that home, ere those years had passed, the kind old man, yearning over his drooping, broken Lily like a loving father, passed away, with his last strength exacting once again from his weeping wife her ancient promise to preserve that last refuge for the suffering one. He died lamenting to the last poor Lily's fatal marriage, yet never dreaming of inflicting the worldly penalty of neglect and blame upon the misfortune from which he would have warned her.

But at last Mark Stanford's course was run. All traces of his former self had long been lost—all beauty, all even of negative worthfulness, everything but the restless love of change, the facile disposition that could resist no new influence, especially if, after the first step had been taken, its direction was evil. He died, and Lily shed some hot tears over the bloated face, so unlike the beautiful features of the Mark Stanford she had learned, in her girlhood's home, to love. She cut away one of the matted nut-brown curls, now thickly streaked with silver threads—tokens not of age, but of restless scheming and unholy passions, and then, when they had borne him away to his plain, but decent funeral, she took her little ones by the hand, and left forever the poor shelter which she need no more call home.

She went back to the home that awaited her, and the tender mother-love of Mrs. Henderson—went "home" to be very happy in that love, but to miss the tones of one kindly voice, the pressure of one loving hand, the kiss of gentle lips that she should never, never hear nor feel again. But she carried there, to those dim rooms, whose luxurious appointments had, during years of waiting for her coming, been shrouded from the light, the merry sound of children's voices, and pattering feet, that renewed the age of the self-styled grandmother, and caused her to live over, in many a simple memory and childish story, the days of her Lily's childhood.

The robes of her widowhood were worn the customary period, and then, throwing them aside, Alice once more entered society. So much respect she had rendered to the dead, for custom's and her children's sake, but she was too truthful to keep up the farce of mournful devotion to the memory of a man who, in outraging her dignity, and wounding her self-respect, had forever destroyed the existence of her love for him. She condemned herself, therefore, to no forced seclusion, but came back to society with the zest caused by long abstinence.

The Lily was more beautiful than in her girlhood. The suffering that had elevated her character had added new graces to her person. She was still young, still greatly admired, and once more she loved—not with the feverish passion that had linked her young life with Mark Stanford's, but with a deep and intense devotion to a noble character—fitting mate to her own, and giving full guarantee, in a spotless life of ceaseless and worthy activity, that now she had not mistaken the true means of happiness.

The Lily's only sorrow, on her second wedding-day, was, that she missed the approving smile which she knew would have dwelt on one dear face, and the fervent blessing of lips that death had silenced.

Many peaceful, many happy years have passed since that day. Lily's eldest daughter has asked her mother's permission to marry a man strangely like Mark Stanford, and that mother's warning words, and the sad history of her first mistake, have saved the young girl from what might have been the saddest fate that can befall a woman—a mistake in the bestowal of her early affections. Thus Lily's life and sorrows have not been all in vain, and she is even grateful, at times, for the experience that gives her words the solemnity of the deep utterances of an oracle—the power to warn and to save.

◆

GOOD AND EVIL.

There's scarce an evil happens in the land,
But instant remedy is close at hand;
When pain and misery meet upon the heart,
Delight and happiness soon say, "Depart!"
The little boy that touched the nettle there,
Did to the dock-leaf speedily repair;
They grow together, side by side, to show
That pain and pleasure link their hands below.
The brute, with lively instinct, finds the herb
Close to the one that did its health disturb,
That heals the wound and gives a sure release—
Thus nature's doctor stands by each disease.
And sweet and bitter are mixed up in life,
Each follows each in everlasting strife.

◆

Creating a Want.—The Rev. Dr. Trench, the last Archbishop of Tuam, though a wealthy man, was extremely simple and temperate in his mode of living—a plain joint of meat supplied his dinner. Whenever he saw one of his children about to try a new dish, not tasted perhaps at any time before, he always said, with a smile, "Now you are going to create a want."

◆

Sayings Without Doings.—"I should just like to pay you off," as John Bull said to the national debt. "I wish I could get things into the right train," as the unprotected female said to herself when she saw her luggage going away from her in all directions.

◆

What is a Million?—If a person employed in telling money, reckon a hundred pieces a minute, and continue to work ten hours each day, he will take seventeen days to reckon a million; a thousand men would take forty-five years to reckon a billion.

◆

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A Distracted Lover's letter shows that the writer is not at peace with his own heart. Before a man seeks the love of a woman, he is bound to consider the consequences, and honorably prepare to meet them. It is too late in the day to hesitate, and suffer prudential reasons to step in. Marry the girl, make her a good husband, and she will never regret having to struggle with you for a few years, perhaps, in comparative obscurity. Poverty is nothing in comparison to a blighted heart. The consciousness that you have an affectionate, confiding being, looking up to you for support, will nerve you to fresh exertions. Besides, by your own account, you have still enough to commence the world again with.

Heart-Broken.—Your husband must be a brute to treat you so ill so soon after marriage. Your hopes of being able to get rid of him, because you were not twenty-one when the marriage took place, is utterly fallacious. The marriage would have been legal had you been much younger than you are. By bringing an action against your husband you can get a divorce from "bed and board," if you can prove his brutal treatment. Cruelty in a husband is not tolerated by law, and if the wretch continues to act like a brute, apply to a magistrate and have him put under bonds for his good behavior.

Jack Wallace.—You must be a presumptuous and conceited fellow to assume that the girl doats upon you, although you have never given her to understand that the attachment was reciprocal. You are probably one of those silly young men who imagine women have only to look at them instantly to become enamored of their manifold attractions. The girl is probably humbugging you greatly to her own and her friends' diversion. Honest and brave old "Jack Wallace" will not thank such a coxcomb for using his name.

A Wronged Girl.—It is unfortunate you have lost the rascal's letters; but if you cannot now sustain an action against him for breach of promise of marriage, your father, or, if he be dead, your mother, may bring an action for loss of your services. A jury, in such a case, rarely refuses the plaintiff a verdict, accompanied by ample damages. If you possess any portion of the spirit of your sex, you will exert yourself to punish the heartless scoundrel.

Apprentice.—Your master can compel you to work in all reasonable hours; but of course he has no right to be unreasonable in his exactions. From five o'clock in the morning till nine at night is too long for any one, and especially a boy, to be confined to hard labor, and you can safely resist such tyranny and inhumanity. Any court in the Union would protect you against such a barbarous master.

George.—Where only wearing apparel is mentioned in a bequest, such articles as a gold watch, chains, and rings, cannot be construed to be included. The addition of general terms which would imply the *entire personal effects* would, of course, include such things; but where there is a specific gift of a certain description of property, the will must be construed strictly.

Harwold J.—A letter addressed "For the Eye and Ear Infirmary, Philadelphia, Penn.," would reach the managers of that institution. We know nothing about its regulations, or the ability with which cases of blindness and deafness are therein treated.

An "Unfortunate."—You should by all means bring an action against the base deceiver. You could undoubtedly recover heavy damages against him. Hereafter be not too confiding, and take care that Love does not a second time run away with the wedding-ring.

Fourteenth Street.—Suppose you take the trouble to count the number of churches in New York, yourself. You might visit them all in a fortnight, and the exercise would do you good.

Metropolis.—The marriage, under the circumstances, is perfectly legal, and no one but a scoundrel would attempt to creep out of it. We do not for a moment suppose that to be your intention or wish.

P. B. C.—A knowledge of French would not be of the slightest assistance to a person desirous of forming a "correct idea of the English language."

Clintonville.—You can quietly drop her acquaintance without giving any reason therefor.

R. M. T.—A year's disparity in age is of no consequence, so prosecute your love suit, marry, and be happy.

A Disconsolate Lover is "enthralled by a siren" whom he adores, but who treats him with disdain, and drives him to distraction by promenading, on pleasant afternoons, with a "detested rival." He has tried to tear her image from his heart, but in vain. Turn which way he will, go where he will, do what he will, she and she only is before his mind's eye, and his love for her is unabated. He wants to know how and where he can find relief. We should say that the best thing he can do will be to get some stalwart friend to give him a good caning, and repeat the dose until his contemptible "spooniness" shall be completely beaten out of him. Or let him go sturdily to work, either physically or mentally; if he will try his hand at street-sweeping, or study Euclid for a few months, we will warrant him a cure. As for his "making away with himself"—a process at which he hints—we have no fears on that score. Your crying, moping lovers never hang, drown, poison or shoot themselves. We often wonder how they manage to get married at all,—for if there is any weakness in a man which a woman despises more than all others, it is the tendency to "snivel" over trifling matters. We therefore advise our "Disconsolate Lover" to put his cambric in his pocket an hush his "snivel."

An Old Reader thinks that the law of gravitation was publicly known before the life of Newton, from its having been referred to by many writers of modern and ancient celebrity. In Shakespeare's "Troilus and Cressida" two remarkable passages occur. In act iii, scene 2, there is an exclamation concluding thus:—

"As true
As iron to adamant, as earth to the center:"

And in act ii, scene 2, a still stronger sentence:—

"My love
Is as the very center of the earth,
Drawing all things to it."

These are remarkable words certainly; but they only prove that in the time of Shakespeare a vague opinion of the truth existed, and that his master-mind grasped at it instantly. It was reserved for Newton to *prove*, and to demonstrate by irrefragible reasoning, that in matter there is a tendency to the center, which is called the law of gravitation, and first so called by that great philosopher.

A Young Philadelphian is deeply in love with a beautiful girl, whom he fears is a dreadful flirt, because he happens to be either the third or fourth favorite she has had within a few months. She is very learned—at least, so our young Philadelphian thinks—and is of a very meditative cast of mind. She seems often "buried in profound thought," although our correspondent naively confesses that he fears she is at such times dwelling with fond remembrance upon the handsome features and dashing manners of a certain old lover. The question is, "How shall he eradicate this meditative tendency in his enslaver?" He should converse forcibly, wittily, humorously, cheerfully, instructively, entertainingly, &c., &c., until he convinces her that he is the most accomplished lover she has had since Cupid first fluttered her heart with his shaft.

A Lady.—We think that marriages between persons of different religious beliefs are inadvisable, because the connubial state supposes a complete union in sentiment, feeling, and inclination; and where one of the essential elements of this condition is wanting, the mutual sympathies that should exist between husband and wife are weakened, and their happiness is liable to be shattered by the slightest causes.

A Young Doctor, who says he is considered the handsomest man in the Empire State, wishes us to insert a matrimonial advertisement for him. We must decline. As to our correspondent's being the handsomest man in the State, we cannot form an opinion; but we think we can safely assure him and the public that he is by far the most conceited person we have ever heard from.

Ulrick.—You cannot gain admission to the Military Academy at West Point before next July or August, so you will have ample time to study and prepare yourself. The Ledger of March 16th has a full statement of the manner in the application for an appointment must be made, when it must be made, how the applicants are examined, &c., &c.

G. M. S.—Do not accept the mortgage and pay out your money, until the instrument shall have been examined by a competent lawyer. In fact, never do any business of importance that you do not yourself thoroughly understand, without consulting a good attorney. For the sake of saving a paltry fee, men often peril and lose large amounts.

Job.—You should stop smoking like a hermit at home, and go more into society. You are none the worse and will be none the less liked for being bashful, so do not be too eager to get rid of the attraction. Modest men are so scarce now-a-days, that you will be esteemed for what you consider an infirmity.

Bion.—Fudge! You are jealous; and a jealous lover is always an intolerable bore, and generally gets more snubbings than kisses for his foolish pains. Don't be silly. You will alienate the affections of a girl who is evidently too good for you, unless you change your tactics; believe in her truth, take her at her word, marry her, and be happy.

Castle Reef.—Turn your toes out when walking; and practice, in some retired spot, walking with your toes turned at right-angles with your body. Also, when sitting down, or in bed, have a pair of braces between your knees so as to keep them apart. Perseverance in this plan will ultimately cure them of the tendency to touch each other.

Anxious Lover.—Yes. A marriage with a girl in her nineteenth year would be legal; although, if her parents object to the match you had better be cautious how you offend them. It would be much the better course to defer the marriage long enough, at least, to enable you to make a fair attempt to bring about a reconciliation.

An Ill-used Son.—The house and lot never having been legally conveyed to you, you are of course liable for the rent. Yours is not the first father who has made an imbecile of himself in his old age by marrying a girl young enough to be his grandchild. The dotards call the cause of such marriages love—the world names it imbecility.

A Friend in Trouble.—You should at once consult a physician of good standing. By dabbling with the nostrums of disreputable quacks your constitution will soon be injured beyond the power of science to restore it. Your professed shame must be disregarded, and your confidence given to some skillful, professional man.

D. R. C.—According to your statement you are under no obligation to assist in defraying the expenses of the litigation, inasmuch as your three friends commenced the suit without consulting you. It may be, however, that the circumstances were such as would justify them in their course.

Lilly of the Valley.—By carefully oiling and brushing your hair every day, and using a leaden comb, you can impart to it a darker hue; but why not let it alone? The meanest natural color is better than the best that is produced by artificial contrivances.

Musicus.—Purchase some elementary work and persevere. You cannot become a master of the instrument at once. It is only by intense and long-continued application that a man can learn to play the violin, as it is the most difficult musical instrument to master we possess.

M. G.—Sir John Franklin left England in the early part of the year 1844 in search of a north-western passage. Of course the idea that he may yet be found alive is utterly preposterous. Thirteen years in the Arctic regions would prove fatal to any inhabitant of a temperate clime.

Adaline.—Lord Byron's father was an Englishman, his mother a Scotchwoman. The poet was born in Aberdeenshire in 1788, and passed his earlier years in Scotland. When ten years old he was sent to Harrow School, and at sixteen entered Trinity College, Cambridge. He died in 1824.

Miss L.—We want no better authority that the "world was drowned" than Moses. As for the doubts and cavils you quote, we regard them not, and you would do well to follow our example. The Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights, are probably electrical phenomena.

Brutus.—Your communication is so long, and is written in such a scrawling and illegible hand, that we cannot afford the outlay of time and patience which would be necessary for its perusal. A brief and legible note from you will stand a chance of receiving attention.

Y. M. S.—You are not permitted to write on the margin of a newspaper to be sent by mail. Why not write a letter and pay the postage? It is a small business to try to defraud the revenue of so pitiful a sum.

R. M. C.—"Deer" is either singular or plural. We say one deer, or a hundred deer. *Cheeses* is the plural of cheese, but the word is seldom used, owing to the article being sold by weight.

L. S. W.—There is no lack of opportunities for boys who wish to go to sea to get berths. By going to any shipping office you can get what information on the subject you desire.

J. S. L.—You and your friends had better get your Ledgers of the news-dealer in your village. We do not wish to take subscriptions from places where there are well-conducted news-offices.

Phebus.—We can't say. It would depend on your mode of living. A couple of persons without children, who have been accustomed to habits of rigid economy, might be able to live on the produce of five acres of good land.

Coriolanus.—We do not know what "part" would be a good one for a "dramatic aspirant" to make his debut in. If there is a part for a "natural born fool," we would advise him to try that.

P. L. R.—Any good history of Scotland will give you the desired information. Sir William Wallace is stated to have been seven feet in hight.

S. P. G.—Be more frugal in your diet, and the blotches in your face, and the other affairs, will perhaps trouble you no more.

O. P. Q.—You can get such elementary works on chemistry and electricity as you desire, at almost any bookstore.

G. G.—If your brother died intestate and without children, his property will go to his father.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*